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THE

WORKS

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CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO IV.

Visto ho Toscana, Lombardia, Romagna,
Quel Monte che divide, e quel che serra
Italia, e un mare e l' altro, che la bagna.
Ariosto, Satira iii.

Venice, January 2, 1818.

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ. A.M. F.R.S.

&c. &c. &c.

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE,

After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of Childe Harold, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better,—to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful—I can, or could be, to Childe Harold, for any public favour reflected through the poem on the poet,—to one, whom I have known long, and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril—to a friend often tried and never found wanting;—to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you in its complete, or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the

record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence, but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain

describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject, are *now* a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have

touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us,—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode,—to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language—" Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte tutte la vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l' antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima." Italy has great names still—Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonte, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of Art, Science, and Belles Lettres;

and in some the very highest—Europe—the World —has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that "La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualunque altra terra—e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova." Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours, that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles and the despair of ages, their still unquenched "longing after immortality,"—the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, "Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima," it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me,

"Non movero mai corda
"Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda."

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, "Verily they *will have* their reward," and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever

Your obliged
And affectionate friend,
BYRON.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO IV.

I.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs; [1]
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

II.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean, [2]
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

III.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more, [3]
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

VI.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

VII.

I saw or dream'd of such,—but let them go—
They came like truth, and disappear'd like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so:
I could replace them if I would; still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found;
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII.

I've taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX.

Perhaps I loved it well; and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language: if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

X.

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
"Sparta hath many a worthier son than he." (4)
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted,—they have torn me,—and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood (5)
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

XII.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns— [6]
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo! [7]
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass? [8]
Are they not *bridled?*—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre,—
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The "Planter of the Lion," [9] which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals,[10]
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,[11]
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII.

I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,[12]
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX.

I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught:
There are some feelings Time can not benumb,
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

XX.

But from their nature will the tannen grow[13]
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,
And grew a giant tree;—the mind may grow the same.

XXI.

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

XXII.

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd,
Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
Ends:—Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again; some, bow'd and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant;
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb;

XXIII.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music,—summer's eve—or spring,
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind, [anew,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

XXV.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which can not be defaced.

XXVII.

The Moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still [14]
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows,

XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.

XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name [15]
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died; [16]
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

XXXII.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive:

XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair [17]
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV.

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scatter'd the clouds away—and on that name attend

XXXVII.

The tears and praises of all time; while thine
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing; but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn:

XXXVIII.

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow [18]
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 'twas his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aim'd with her poison'd arrows; but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine? though all in one
Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun.

XL.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust [19]
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves [20]
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below [21]
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

XLII.

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast [22]
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and could'st claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII.

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him, [23]
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV.

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but uprear'd
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light,
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI.

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is;* and now, alas!
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form, (24)
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII.

Yet, Italy! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side;
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;
Parent of our Religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVIII.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

XLIX.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills [25]
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

LI.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of War?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek! (26) while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn!

LII.

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go!
We can recal such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII.

I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable:
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell;
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie [27]
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his, [28]
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose. [29]

LV.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin:—thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

LVI.

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
Their bones, distinguished from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles nought to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth intrust?

LVII.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,[30]
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore; [31]
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages; and the crown [32]
Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

LVIII.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd[33]
His dust,—and lies it not her Great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom!*

LIX.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honour'd sleeps
The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and weeps.

LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones? (34)
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dews
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine;
For I have been accustom'd to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII.

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swoln to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er,

LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the phrensy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away! (35)
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV.

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to Eternity; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave [36]
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters—
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

LXVII.

And on thy happy shore a temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

XLVIII.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism,—'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale:—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,[37]

‡

LXXII.

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,[38]
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more;[39]
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont-Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV.

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soar'd unutterably high:
I 've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's heights display'd
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

LXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word [40]
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI.

Aught that recals the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now; (41)
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, "here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry "Eureka!" it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs![42] and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

LXXXIII.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,[43]
Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath,—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named Eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was Almighty hail'd!

LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors; but our own
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the selfsame day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.[44]
And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and sway
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom!

LXXXVII.

And thou, dread statue! yet existent in [45]
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome! [46]
She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest:—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's etherial dart,
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX.

Thou dost;—but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron; and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

XC.

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould, (47)
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd,

XCI.

And came—and saw—and conquer'd! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
Coquettish in ambition—still he aim'd—
At what? can he avouch—or answer what he claim'd?

XCII.

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
For the sure grave to level him; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears
The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow!—Renew thy rainbow, God!

XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail, (48)
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light.

XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd, and known,—and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd,
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII.

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

XCVIII.

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX.

There is a stern round tower of other days, [49]
Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown;—
What was this tower of strength? within its cave
What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid?—A woman's grave.

C.

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tomb'd in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
Worthy a king's—or more—a Roman's bed?
What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
How lived—how loved—how died she? Was she not
So honour'd—and conspicuously there,
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

CI.

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others? such have been
Even in the olden time Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

CII.

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bow'd
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom [(50)
Heaven gives its favourites—early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illume
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recal,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome——But whither would Conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife; Behold his love or pride!

CIV.

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou tomb! and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

CV.

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI.

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
As I now hear them, in the fading light
Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
Answering each other on the Palatine,
With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

CVII.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd
In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
Deeming it midnight:—Temples, baths, or halls?
Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap'd
From her research hath been, that these are walls—
Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls. (51)

CVIII.

There is the moral of all human tales; (52)
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
And History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but *one* page,—'tis better written here,
Where gorgeous Tyranny had thus amass'd
All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask——Away with words! draw near,

CIX.

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep,—for here
There is such matter for all feeling:—Man!
Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
This mountain, whose obliterated plan
The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!
Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column with the buried base!
What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.
Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's? No—'tis that of Time:
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace,
Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime, (53)

‡

CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars: they had contain'd
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,
But yielded back his conquests:—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore.[54]

CXII.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII.

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;
But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV.

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree (55)
Of Freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart (56)
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prison'd in marble, bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy, creep

CXVII.

Fantastically tangled; the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its skies.

CXVIII.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befel?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamoured Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle!

CXIX.

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transports? could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloys?

CXX.

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI.

Oh Love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd—wearied—
wrung—and riven.

CXXII.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation:—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can Nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII.

Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved,
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns Hope to dust,—the dust we all have trod.

CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature—'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see—
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base (57)
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine.
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII.

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine
As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX.

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX.

Oh Time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled—
Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love,—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years—though few, yet full of fate:—
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII.

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Lost the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis! (53)
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt, and must.

CXXXIII.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake——
But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV.

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffer'd: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV.

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven!—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII.

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles; and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.
And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL.

I see before me the Gladiator lie: (59)
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—(60)
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLII.

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,(61)
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLIII.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head; (62)
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

CXLV.

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand; (63)
"When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall; [land
"And when Rome falls—the World." From our own
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time; (64)
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome!
Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!

CXLVII.

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!
Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts—
To art a model; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture; to those
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.(65)

CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light (66)
What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again!
Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
It is not so; I see them full and plain—
An old man, and a female young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar:—but what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX.

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
What may the fruit be yet?—I know not—Cain was Eve's.

CL.

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift:—it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
Than Egypt's river:—from that gentle side
Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm holds no such tide.

CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity; it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds:—Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII.

Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd on high, (67)
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth
His shrunken ashes raise this dome: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth!

CLIII.

But lo! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,[68]
To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle—
Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
The hyæna and the jackall in their shade;
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;

CLIV.

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? it is not lessen'd; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

CLVI.

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows—but grows to harmonize—
All musical in its immensities;
Rich marbles—richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must claim.

CLVII.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole;
And as the ocean many bays will make,
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII.

Not by its fault—but thine: Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
The fountain of sublimity displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending:—Vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
The God of life, and poesy, and light—
The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,
Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
When each conception was a heavenly guest—
A ray of immortality—and stood,
Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god!

CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
The fire which we endure, it was repaid
By him to whom the energy was given
Which this poetic marble hath array'd
With an eternal glory—which, if made
By human hands, is not of human thought;
And Time himself hath hallow'd it, nor laid
One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which
'twas wrought.

CLXIV.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his last:
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself as nothing:—if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall [cloud
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the
Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII.

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound; [ground,
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored!
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard
Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX.

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid,
The love of millions! How we did intrust
Futurity to her! and, though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
Like stars to shepherds' eyes:—'twas but a meteor beam'd.

CLXXI.

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate (69)
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

CLXXII.

These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there!*
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

CLXXIII.

(70) Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprang the Epic war,
"Arms and the Man," whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire;—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome;—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight. (71)

CLXXV.

But I forget.—My pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many, since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here;
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain!

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand.

Stanza i. lines 1 and 2.

THE communication between the ducal palace and the prisons of Venice is by a gloomy bridge, or covered gallery, high above the water, and divided by a stone wall into a passage and a cell. The state dungeons, called "pozzi," or wells, were sunk in the thick walls of the palace; and the prisoner when taken out to die was conducted across the gallery to the other side, and being then led back into the other compartment, or cell, upon the bridge, was there strangled. The low portal through which the criminal was taken into this cell is now walled up; but the passage is still open, and is still known by the name of the Bridge of Sighs. The pozzi are under the flooring of the chamber at the foot of the bridge. They were formerly twelve, but on the first arrival of the French, the Venetians hastily blocked or broke up the deeper of these dungeons. You may still, however, descend by a trap-door, and crawl down through holes, half-choked by rubbish, to the depth of two stories below the first range. If you are in want of consolation for the extinction of patrician power, perhaps you may find it there; scarcely a ray of light glimmers into the narrow gallery which leads to the cells, and the places of confinement themselves are totally dark. A small hole in the wall admitted the damp air of the passages, and served for the introduction of the prisoner's food. A wooden pallet, raised a foot from the ground, was the only furniture. The conductors tell you that a light was not allowed. The cells are about five paces in length, two and a half in

width, and seven feet in height. They are directly beneath one another, and respiration is somewhat difficult in the lower holes. Only one prisoner was found when the republicans descended into these hideous recesses, and he is said to have been confined sixteen years. But the inmates of the dungeons beneath had left traces of their repentance, or of their despair, which are still visible, and may perhaps owe something to recent ingenuity. Some of the detained appear to have offended against, and others to have belonged to, the sacred body, not only from their signatures, but from the churches and belfries which they have scratched upon the walls. The reader may not object to see a specimen of the records prompted by so terrific a solitude. As nearly as they could be copied by more than one pencil, three of them are as follows:

1.

NON TI FIDAR AD ALCUNO PENSA e TACI
SE FUGIR VUOI DE SPIONI INSIDIE e LACCI
IL PENTIRTI PENTIRTI NULLA GIOVA
MA BEN DI VALOR TUO LA VERA PROVA
1607. ADI 2. GENARO. FUI RE-
TENTO P' LA BESTIEMMA P' AVER DATO
DA MANZAR A UN MORTO
IACOMO . GRITTI . SCRISSE.

2.

UN PARLAR POCHO et
NEGARE PRONTO et
UN PENSAR AL FINE PUO DARE LA VITA
A NOI ALTRI MESCHINI
1605
EGO IOHN BAPTISTA AD
ECCLESIAM CORTELLARIUS.

3.

DE CHI MI FIDO GUARDAMI DIO
DE CHI NON MI FIDO MI GUARDARO IO
A
V. LA S^{TA}. C^{H}. K^{A}. R^{NA}.

The copyist has followed, not corrected the solecisms; some of which are however not quite so decided, since the letters

were evidently scratched in the dark. It only need be observed, that *bestemmia* and *mangiar* may be read in the first inscription, which was probably written by a prisoner confined for some act of impiety committed at a funeral; that *Cortellarius* is the name of a parish on terra firma, near the sea; and that the last initials evidently are put for *Viva la santa Chiesa Kattolica Romana.*

2.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers.

Stanza ii. lines 1 and 2.

An old writer, describing the appearance of Venice, has made use of the above image, which would not be poetical were it not true.

"*Quo fit ut qui superne urbem contempletur, turritam telluris imaginem medio Oceano figuratam se putet inspicere*[1]."

3.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more.

Stanza iii. line 1.

The well known song of the gondoliers, of alternate stanzas, from Tasso's Jerusalem, has died with the independence of Venice. Editions of the poem, with the original on one column, and the Venetian variations on the other, as sung by the boatmen, were once common, and are still to be found. The following extract will serve to show the difference between the Tuscan epic and the "Canta alla Barcariola."

ORIGINAL.

Canto l' arme pietose, e 'l capitano
Che 'l gran Sepolcro liberò di Cristo.
Molto egli oprò col senno, e con la mano
Molto soffrì nel glorioso acquisto;
E in van l' Inferno a lui s' oppose, e in vano
S' armò d' Asia, e di Libia il popol misto,
Che il Ciel gli diè favore, e sotto a i Santi
Segni ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.

1 Marci Antonii Sabelli de Venetæ Urbis situ narratio, edit. Taurin. 1527, lib. i. fol. 202.

VENETIAN.

L' arme pietose de cantar gho vogia,
E de Goffredo la immortal braura
Che al fin l' ha libera co strassia, e dogia
Del nostro buon Gesú la Sepoltura
De mezo mondo unito, e de quel Bogia
Missier Pluton non l' ha bu mai paura:
Dio l' ha agiutá, e i compagni sparpagnai
Tutti 'l gh' i ha messi insieme i di del Dai.

Some of the elder gondoliers will, however, take up and continue a stanza of their once familiar bard.

On the 7th of last January, the author of Childe Harold, and another Englishman, the writer of this notice, rowed to the Lido with two singers, one of whom was a carpenter, and the other a gondolier. The former placed himself at the prow, the latter at the stern of the boat. A little after leaving the quay of the Piazetta, they began to sing, and continued their exercise until we arrived at the island. They gave us, amongst other essays, the death of Clorinda, and the palace of Armida; and did not sing the Venetian, but the Tuscan verses. The carpenter, however, who was the cleverer of the two, and was frequently obliged to prompt his companion, told us that he could *translate* the original. He added, that he could sing almost three hundred stanzas, but had not spirits (*morbin* was the word he used) to learn any more, or to sing what he already knew: a man must have idle time on his hands to acquire, or to repeat, and, said the poor fellow, "look at my clothes and at me; I am starving." This speech was more affecting than his performance, which habit alone can make attractive. The recitative was shrill, screaming, and monotonous, and the gondolier behind assisted his voice by holding his hand to one side of his mouth. The carpenter used a quiet action, which he evidently endeavoured to restrain; but was too much interested in his subject altogether to repress. From these men we learnt that singing is not confined to the gondoliers, and that, although the chant is seldom, if ever, voluntary, there are still several amongst the lower classes who are acquainted with a few stanzas.

It does not appear that it is usual for the performers to row

and sing at the same time. Although the verses of the Jerusalem are no longer casually heard, there is yet much music upon the Venetian canals; and upon holidays, those strangers who are not near or informed enough to distinguish the words, may fancy that many of the gondolas still resound with the strains of Tasso. The writer of some remarks which appeared in the Curiosities of Literature must excuse his being twice quoted; for, with the exception of some phrases a little too ambitious and extravagant, he has furnished a very exact, as well as agreeable, description.

"In Venice the gondoliers know by heart long passages from Ariosto and Tasso, and often chant them with a peculiar melody. But this talent seems at present on the decline:—at least, after taking some pains, I could find no more than two persons who delivered to me in this way a passage from Tasso. I must add, that the late Mr. Berry once chanted to me a passage in Tasso in the manner, as he assured me, of the gondoliers.

"There are always two concerned, who alternately sing the strophes. We know the melody eventually by Rousseau, to whose songs it is printed; it has properly no melodious movement, and is a sort of medium between the canto fermo and the canto figurato; it approaches to the former by recitativical declamation, and to the latter by passages and course, by which one syllable is detained and embellished.

"I entered a gondola by moonlight; one singer placed himself forwards, and the other aft, and thus proceeded to St. Georgio. One began the song: when he had ended his strophe, the other took up the lay, and so continued the song alternately. Throughout the whole of it, the same notes invariably returned, but, according to the subject matter of the strophe, they laid a greater or a smaller stress, sometimes on one, and sometimes on another note, and indeed changed the enunciation of the whole strophe as the object of the poem altered.

"On the whole, however, the sounds were hoarse and screaming: they seemed, in the manner of all rude uncivilized men, to make the excellency of their singing in the force of their voice: one seemed desirous of conquering the other by the strength of his lungs; and so far from receiving delight

from this scene (shut up as I was in the box of the gondola), I found myself in a very unpleasant situation.

" My companion, to whom I communicated this circumstance, being very desirous to keep up the credit of his countrymen, assured me that this singing was very delightful when heard at a distance. Accordingly we got out upon the shore, leaving one of the singers in the gondola, while the other went to the distance of some hundred paces. They now began to sing against one another, and I kept walking up and down between them both, so as always to leave him who was to begin his part. I frequently stood still and hearkened to the one and to the other.

" Here the scene was properly introduced. The strong declamatory, and, as it were, shrieking sound, met the ear from far, and called forth the attention; the quickly succeeding transitions, which necessarily required to be sung in a lower tone, seemed like plaintive strains succeeding the vociferations of emotion or of pain. The other, who listened attentively, immediately began where the former left off, answering him in milder or more vehement notes, according as the purport of the strophe required. The sleepy canals, the lofty buildings, the splendour of the moon, the deep shadows of the few gondolas, that moved like spirits hither and thither, increased the striking peculiarity of the scene; and amidst all these circumstances it was easy to confess the character of this wonderful harmony.

" It suits perfectly well with an idle solitary mariner, lying at length in his vessel at rest on one of these canals, waiting for his company, or for a fare, the tiresomeness of which situation is somewhat alleviated by the songs and poetical stories he has in memory. He often raises his voice as loud as he can, which extends itself to a vast distance over the tranquil mirror, and as all is still around, he is, as it were, in a solitude in the midst of a large and populous town. Here is no rattling of carriages, no noise of foot passengers: a silent gondola glides now and then by him, of which the splashings of the oars are scarcely to be heard.

" At a distance he hears another, perhaps utterly unknown to him. Melody and verse immediately attach the two strangers; he becomes the responsive echo to the former, and exerts him-

self to be heard as he had heard the other. By a tacit convention they alternate verse for verse; though the song should last the whole night through, they entertain themselves without fatigue: the hearers, who are passing between the two, take part in the amusement.

"This vocal performance sounds best at a great distance, and is then inexpressibly charming, as it only fulfils its design in the sentiment of remoteness. It is plaintive, but not dismal in its sound, and at times it is scarcely possible to refrain from tears. My companion, who otherwise was not a very delicately organized person, said quite unexpectedly: e singolare come quel canto intenerisce, e molto più quando lo cantano meglio.

"I was told that the women of Libo, the long row of islands that divides the Adriatic from the Lagouns[1], particularly the women of the extreme districts of Malamocco and Palestrina, sing in like manner the works of Tasso to these and similar tunes.

"They have the custom, when their husbands are fishing out at sea, to sit along the shore in the evenings, and vociferate these songs, and continue to do so with great violence, till each of them can distinguish the responses of her own husband at a distance[2]."

The love of music and of poetry distinguishes all classes of Venetians, even amongst the tuneful sons of Italy. The city itself can occasionally furnish respectable audiences for two and even three opera-houses at a time; and there are few events in private life that do not call forth a printed and circulated sonnet. Does a physician or a lawyer take his degree, or a clergyman preach his maiden sermon, has a surgeon performed an operation, would a harlequin announce his departure or his benefit, are you to be congratulated on a marriage, or a birth, or a lawsuit, the Muses are invoked to furnish the same number of syllables, and the individual triumphs blaze abroad in virgin white or party-coloured placards on half the corners of

1 The writer meant *Lido*, which is not a long row of islands, but a long island: *littus*, the shore.

2 Curiosities of Literature, vol. ii. p. 136. edit. 1807; and Appendix xxix. to Black's Life of Tasso.

the capital. The last curtsy of a favourite "prima donna" brings down a shower of these poetical tributes from those upper regions, from which, in our theatres, nothing but cupids and snow storms are accustomed to descend. There is a poetry in the very life of a Venetian, which, in its common course, is varied with those surprises and changes so recommendable in fiction, but so different from the sober monotony of northern existence; amusements are raised into duties, duties are softened into amusements, and every object being considered as equally making a part of the business of life, is announced and performed with the same earnest indifference and gay assiduity. The Venetian gazette constantly closes its columns with the following triple advertisement.

Charade.

Exposition of the most Holy Sacrament in the church of St. ——

Theatres.

St. Moses, opera.
St. Benedict, a comedy of characters.
St. Luke, repose.

When it is recollected what the Catholics believe their consecrated wafer to be, we may perhaps think it worthy of a more respectable niche than between poetry and the playhouse.

4.

Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.

Stanza x. line 5.

The answer of the mother of Brasidas to the strangers who praised the memory of her son.

5.

St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
Stand,——

Stanza xi. line 5.

The lion has lost nothing by his journey to the Invalides but the gospel which supported the paw that is now on a level with the other foot. The horses also are returned to the ill-chosen spot whence they set out, and are, as before, half hidden under the porch window of St. Mark's church.

Their history, after a desperate struggle, has been satisfactorily explored. The decisions and doubts of Erizzo and Zanetti, and lastly, of the Count Leopold Cicognara, would have given them a Roman extraction, and a pedigree not more ancient than the reign of Nero. But M. de Schlegel stepped in to teach the Venetians the value of their own treasures, and a Greek vindicated, at last and for ever, the pretension of his countrymen to this noble production[1]. Mr. Mustoxidi has not been left without a reply; but, as yet, he has received no answer. It should seem that the horses are irrevocably Chian, and were transferred to Constantinople by Theodosius. Lapidary writing is a favourite play of the Italians, and has conferred reputation on more than one of their literary characters. One of the best specimens of Bodoni's typography is a respectable volume of inscriptions, all written by his friend Pacciaudi. Several were prepared for the recovered horses. It is to be hoped the best was not selected, when the following words were ranged in gold letters above the cathedral porch.

QUATUOR . EQUORUM . SIGNA . A. VENETIS . BYZANTIO . CAPTA . AD . TEMP . D . MAR. A. R. S. MCCIV . POSITA . QUÆ . HOSTILIS . CUPIDITAS . A. MDCCIIIC . ABSTULERAT . FRANC . I . IMP . FACIS . ORBI . DATÆ . TROPHÆUM . A. MDCCCXV . VICTOR . REDUXIT.

Nothing shall be said of the Latin, but it may be permitted to observe, that the injustice of the Venetians in transporting the horses from Constantinople was at least equal to that of the French in carrying them to Paris, and that it would have been more prudent to have avoided all allusions to either robbery. An apostolic prince should, perhaps, have objected to affixing over the principal entrance of a metropolitan church, an inscription having a reference to any other triumphs than those of religion. Nothing less than the pacification of the world can excuse such a solecism.

[1] Sui quattro cavalli della Basilica di S. Marco in Venezia. Lettera di Andrea Mustoxidi Corcirese. Padua, per Bettoni e compag. ..... 1816.

6.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns —
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt.

Stanza xii. lines 1 and 2.

After many vain efforts on the part of the Italians entirely to throw off the yoke of Frederic Barbarossa, and as fruitless attempts of the Emperor to make himself absolute master throughout the whole of his Cisalpine dominions, the bloody struggles of four and twenty years were happily brought to a close in the city of Venice. The articles of a treaty had been previously agreed upon between Pope Alexander III. and Barbarossa, and the former having received a safe conduct, had already arrived at Venice from Ferrara, in company with the ambassadors of the king of Sicily and the consuls of the Lombard league. There still remained, however, many points to adjust, and for several days the peace was believed to be impracticable. At this juncture it was suddenly reported that the Emperor had arrived at Chioza, a town fifteen miles from the capital. The Venetians rose tumultuously, and insisted upon immediately conducting him to the city. The Lombards took the alarm, and departed towards Treviso. The Pope himself was apprehensive of some disaster if Frederic should suddenly advance upon him, but was reassured by the prudence and address of Sebastian Ziani, the Doge. Several embassies passed between Chioza and the capital, until, at last, the Emperor relaxing somewhat of his pretensions, "laid aside his leonine ferocity, and put on the mildness of the lamb [1]."

On Saturday the 23d of July, in the year 1177, six Venetian galleys transferred Frederic, in great pomp, from Chioza to the island of Lido, a mile from Venice. Early the next morning the Pope, accompanied by the Sicilian ambassadors, and by the envoys of Lombardy, whom he had recalled from the main land, together with a great concourse of people, repaired from the patriarchal palace to St. Mark's church, and solemnly absolved the Emperor and his partisans from the excommunication

[1] "Quibus auditis, imperator, operante eo, qui corda principum sicut vult et quando vult humiliter inclinat, leonina feritate deposita, ovinam mansuetudinem induit." Romualdi Salernitani. Chronicon. apud Script. Rer. Ital. Tom. VII. p. 229.

pronounced against him. The Chancellor of the Empire, on the part of his master, renounced the anti-popes and their schismatic adherents. Immediately the Doge, with a great suite both of the clergy and laity, got on board the galleys, and waiting on Frederic, rowed him in mighty state from the Lido to the capital. The Emperor descended from the galley at the quay of the Piazzetta. The Doge, the patriarch, his bishops and clergy, and the people of Venice with their crosses and their standards, marched in solemn procession before him to the church of Saint Mark. Alexander was seated before the vestibule of the basilica, attended by his bishops and cardinals, by the patriarch of Aquileja, by the archbishops and bishops of Lombardy, all of them in state, and clothed in their church robes. Frederic approached—"moved by the Holy Spirit, venerating the Almighty in the person of Alexander, laying aside his imperial dignity, and throwing off his mantle, he prostrated himself at full length at the feet of the Pope. Alexander, with tears in his eyes, raised him benignantly from the ground, kissed him, blessed him; and immediately the Germans of the train sang, with a loud voice, 'We praise thee, O Lord.' The Emperor then taking the Pope by the right hand, led him to the church, and having received his benediction, returned to the ducal palace [1]." The ceremony of humiliation was repeated the next day. The Pope himself, at the request of Frederic, said mass at St. Mark's. The Emperor again laid aside his imperial mantle, and, taking a wand in his hand, officiated as *verger*, driving the laity from the choir, and preceding the pontiff to the altar. Alexander, after reciting the gospel, preached to the people. The Emperor put himself close to the pulpit in the attitude of listening; and the pontiff, touched by this mark of his attention, for he knew that Frederic did not understand a word he said, commanded the patriarch of Aquileja to translate the Latin discourse into the German tongue. The creed was then chanted. Frederic made his oblation and kissed the Pope's feet, and mass being over, led him by the hand to his white horse. He held the stirrup, and would have led the horse's rein to the water side, had not the Pope accepted of the

[1] Ibid. page 231.

inclination for the performance, and affectionately dismissed him with his benediction. Such is the substance of the account left by the archbishop of Salerno, who was present at the ceremony, and whose story is confirmed by every subsequent narration. It would be not worth so minute a record, were it not the triumph of liberty as well as of superstition. The states of Lombardy owed to it the confirmation of their privileges; and Alexander had reason to thank the Almighty, who had enabled an infirm, unarmed old man to subdue a terrible and potent sovereign [1].

7.

Oh, for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

Stanza xii. lines 8 and 9.

The reader will recollect the exclamation of the highlander, *Oh for one hour of Dundee!* Henry Dandolo, when elected Doge, in 1192, was eighty-five years of age. When he commanded the Venetians at the taking of Constantinople, he was consequently ninety-seven years old. At this age he annexed the fourth and a half of the whole empire of Romania [2], for so the Roman empire was then called, to the title and to the territories of the Venetian Doge. The three-eighths of this empire were preserved in the diplomas until the dukedom of Giovanni Dolfino, who made use of the above designation in the year 1357 [3].

[1] See the above cited Romuald of Salerno. In a second sermon which Alexander preached, on the first day of August, before the Emperor, he compared Frederic to the prodigal son, and himself to the forgiving father.

[2] Mr. Gibbon has omitted the important *æ*, and has written Romani instead of Romaniæ. Decline and Fall, cap. lxi. note 9. But the title acquired by Dandolo runs thus in the chronicle of his namesake, the Doge Andrew Dandolo. *Ducali titulo addidit.* "*Quartæ partis et dimidiæ totius imperii Romaniæ.*" And. Dand. Chronicon. cap. iii. pars xxxvii. ap. Script. Rer. Ital. tom. xii. page 331. And the Romaniæ is observed in the subsequent acts of the Doges. Indeed the continental possessions of the Greek empire in Europe were then generally known by the name of Romania, and that appellation is still seen in the maps of Turkey as applied to Thrace.

[3] See the continuation of Dandolo's Chronicle, ibid. page 498. Mr. Gibbon appears not to include Dolfino, following Sanudo, who says, "*il qual titolo si uso fin al Doge Giovanni Dolfino.*" See Vite de' Duchi di Venezia. ap. Script. Rer. Ital. tom. xxii. 530. 641.

Dandolo led the attack on Constantinople in person: two ships, the Paradise and the Pilgrim, were tied together, and a drawbridge or ladder let down from their higher yards to the walls. The Doge was one of the first to rush into the city. Then was completed, said the Venetians, the prophecy of the Erythræan sibyl. "A gathering together of the powerful shall be made amidst the waves of the Adriatic, under a blind leader; they shall beset the goat—they shall profane Byzantium —they shall blacken her buildings—her spoils shall be dispersed; a new goat shall bleat until they have measured out and run over fifty-four feet, nine inches, and a half[1]."

Dandolo died on the first day of June, 1205, having reigned thirteen years, six months, and five days, and was buried in the church of St. Sophia, at Constantinople. Strangely enough it must sound, that the name of the rebel apothecary who received the Doge's sword, and annihilated the ancient government, in 1796-7, was Dandolo.

8.

But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not bridled?

Stanza xiii. lines 3 and 4.

After the loss of the battle of Pola, and the taking of Chioza on the 16th of August, 1379, by the united armament of the Genoese and Francesco da Carrara, Signor of Padua, the Venetians were reduced to the utmost despair. An embassy was sent to the conquerors with a blank sheet of paper, praying them to prescribe what terms they pleased, and leave to Venice only her independence. The Prince of Padua was inclined to listen to these proposals, but the Genoese, who, after the victory of Pola, had shouted, "to Venice, to Venice, and long live St. George," determined to annihilate their rival, and Peter Doria, their commander in chief, returned this answer to the

[1] "*Fiet potentium in aquis Adriaticis congregatio, cæco præduce, Hircum ambigent, Byzantium prophanabunt, ædificia denigrabunt: spolia dispergentur, Hircus novus balabit usque dum* LIV *pedes et* IX *pollices, et semis præmensurati discurrant.*" [Chronicon. ibid. pars xxxiv.]

suppliants: "On God's faith, gentlemen of Venice, ye shall have no peace from the Signor of Padua, nor from our commune of Genoa, until we have first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours, that are upon the porch of your evangelist St. Mark. When we have bridled them, we shall keep you quiet. And this is the pleasure of us and of our commune. As for these my brothers of Genoa, that you have brought with you to give up to us, I will not have them: take them back; for, in a few days hence, I shall come and let them out of prison myself, both these and all the others[1]." In fact, the Genoese did advance as far as Malamocco, within five miles of the capital; but their own danger and the pride of their enemies gave courage to the Venetians, who made prodigious efforts, and many individual sacrifices, all of them carefully recorded by their historians. Vettor Pisani was put at the head of thirty-four galleys. The Genoese broke up from Malamocco, and retired to Chioza in October; but they again threatened Venice, which was reduced to extremities. At this time, the 1st of January, 1380, arrived Carlo Zeno, who had been cruising on the Genoese coast with fourteen galleys. The Venetians were now strong enough to besiege the Genoese. Doria was killed on the 22d of January by a stone bullet 195 pounds weight, discharged from a bombard called the Trevisan. Chioza was then closely invested: 5000 auxiliaries, amongst whom were some English Condottieri, commanded by one Captain Ceccho, joined the Venetians. The Genoese, in their turn, prayed for conditions, but none were granted, until, at last, they surrendered at discretion; and, on the 24th of June, 1380, the Doge Contarini made his triumphal entry into Chioza. Four thousand prisoners, nineteen galleys, many smaller vessels and barks, with all the ammunition and arms, and outfit of the

[1] "*Alla fè di Dio, Signori Veneziani, non haverete mai pace dal Signore di Padoua, nè dal nostro commune di Genova, se primieramente non mettemo le briglie a quelli vostri cavalli sfrenati, che sono su la Reza del Vostro Evangelista S. Marco. Imbrenati che gli havremo, vi faremo stare in buona pace. E questa e la intenzione nostra, e del nostro commune. Questi miei fratelli Genovesi che havete menati con voi per donarci, non li voglio; rimanetegli in dietro perche io intendo da qui a pochi giorni venirgli a riscuoter dalle vostre prigioni, e loro e gli altri.*"

expedition, fell into the hands of the conquerors, who, had it not been for the inexorable answer of Doria, would have gladly reduced their dominion to the city of Venice. An account of these transactions is found in a work called the War of Chioza, written by Daniel Chinazzo, who was in Venice at the time [1].

9.

The "Planter of the Lion."

Stanza xiv. line 3.

Plant the Lion—that is, the Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the republic, which is the origin of the word Pantaloon—Piantaleone, Pantaleon, Pantaloon.

10.

Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals.

Stanza xv. lines 7 and 8.

The population of Venice at the end of the seventeenth century amounted to nearly two hundred thousand souls. At the last census, taken two years ago, it was no more than about one hundred and three thousand, and it diminishes daily. The commerce and the official employments, which were to be the unexhausted source of Venetian grandeur, have both expired [2]. Most of the patrician mansions are deserted, and would gradually disappear, had not the government, alarmed by the demolition of seventy-two, during the last two years, expressly forbidden this sad resource of poverty. Many remnants of the Venetian nobility are now scattered and confounded with the wealthier Jews upon the banks of the Brenta, whose palladian palaces have sunk, or are sinking, in the general decay. Of the "gentil uomo Veneto," the name is still known, and that is all. He is but the shadow of his former self, but

1 "Chronaca della guerra di Chioza," &c. Script. Rer. Italic. tom. xv. pp. 699 to 804.

2 "Nonnullorum è nobilitate immensæ sunt opes, adeo ut vix æstimari possint: id quod tribus è rebus oritur, parsimonia, commercio, atque iis emolumentis, quæ è Repub. percipiunt, quæ hanc ob causam diuturna fore creditur."—See de Principatibus Italiæ, Tractatus, edit. 1631.

he is polite and kind. It surely may be pardoned to him if he is querulous. Whatever may have been the vices of the republic, and although the natural term of its existence may be thought by foreigners to have arrived in the due course of mortality, only one sentiment can be expected from the Venetians themselves. At no time were the subjects of the republic so unanimous in their resolution to rally round the standard of St. Mark, as when it was for the last time unfurled; and the cowardice and the treachery of the few patricians who recommended the fatal neutrality were confined to the persons of the traitors themselves. The present race cannot be thought to regret the loss of their aristocratical forms, and too despotic government; they think only on their vanished independence. They pine away at the remembrance, and on this subject suspend for a moment their gay good humour. Venice may be said, in the words of the scripture, "to die daily;" and so general and so apparent is the decline, as to become painful to a stranger, not reconciled to the sight of a whole nation expiring as it were before his eyes. So artificial a creation having lost that principle which called it into life and supported its existence, must fall to pieces at once, and sink more rapidly than it rose. The abhorrence of slavery which drove the Venetians to the sea, has, since their disaster, forced them to the land, where they may be at least overlooked amongst the crowd of dependents, and not present the humiliating spectacle of a whole nation loaded with recent chains. Their liveliness, their affability, and that happy indifference which constitution alone can give, for philosophy aspires to it in vain, have not sunk under circumstances; but many peculiarities of costume and manner have by degrees been lost, and the nobles, with a pride common to all Italians who have been masters, have not been persuaded to parade their insignificance. That splendour which was a proof and a portion of their power, they would not degrade into the trappings of their subjection. They retired from the space which they had occupied in the eyes of their fellow citizens; their continuance in which would have been a symptom of acquiescence, and an insult to those who suffered by the common misfortune. Those who remained in the degraded capital might be said rather to haunt the scenes of their departed

power, than to live in them. The reflection, "who and what enthrals," will hardly bear a comment from one who is, nationally, the friend and the ally of the conqueror. It may, however, be allowed to say thus much, that to those who wish to recover their independence, any masters must be an object of detestation; and it may be safely foretold that this unprofitable aversion will not have been corrected before Venice shall have sunk into the slime of her choked canals.

11.

Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse.
Stanza xvi. line 3.

The story is told in Plutarch's life of Nicias.

12.

And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art.
Stanza xviii. line 5.

Venice Preserved; Mysteries of Udolpho; the Ghost-seer, or Armenian; the Merchant of Venice; Othello.

13.

But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks.
Stanza xx. lines 1 and 2.

Tannen is the plural of *tanne*, a species of fir peculiar to the Alps, which only thrives in very rocky parts, where scarcely soil sufficient for its nourishment can be found. On these spots it grows to a greater height than any other mountain tree.

14.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven.
Stanza xxviii. lines 1 and 2.

The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an Oriental or an Italian sky, yet it is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening (the eighteenth) as contemplated in one of many rides along the banks of the Brenta near La Mira.

15.

Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.
Stanza xxx. lines 8 and 9.

Thanks to the critical acumen of a Scotchman, we now know as little of Laura as ever[1]. The discoveries of the Abbé de Sade, his triumphs, his sneers, can no longer instruct or amuse[2]. We must not, however, think that these memoirs are as much a romance as Belisarius or the Incas, although we are told so by Dr. Beattie, a great name but a little authority[3]. His "labour" has not been in vain, notwithstanding his "love" has, like most other passions, made him ridiculous[4]. The hypothesis which overpowered the struggling Italians, and carried along less interested critics in its current, is run out. We have another proof that we can be never sure that the paradox, the most singular, and therefore having the most agreeable and authentic air, will not give place to the re-established ancient prejudice.

It seems, then, first, that Laura was born, lived, died, and was buried, not in Avignon, but in the country. The fountains of the Sorga, the thickets of Cabrieres, may resume their pretensions, and the exploded *de la Bastie* again be heard with complacency. The hypothesis of the Abbé had no stronger props than the parchment sonnet and medal found on the skeleton of the wife of Hugo de Sade, and the munuscript note to the Virgil of Petrarch, now in the Ambrosian library. If these proofs were both incontestable, the poetry was written,

1 See An Historical and Critical Essay on the Life and Character of Petrarch; and a Dissertation on an Historical Hypothesis of the Abbé de Sade: the first appeared about the year 1784; the other is inserted in the fourth volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and both have been incorporated into a work, published, under the first title, by Ballantyne in 1810.

2 Mémoires pour la Vie de Pétrarque.

3 Life of Beattie, by Sir W. Forbes, t. ii. p. 106.

4 Mr. Gibbon called his Memoirs, "*a labour of love*," (see Decline and Fall, cap. lxx. note 1.), and followed him with confidence and delight. The compiler of a very voluminous work must take much criticism upon trust; Mr. Gibbon has done so, though not so readily as some other authors.

the medal composed, cast, and deposited within the space of twelve hours; and these deliberate duties were performed round the carcass of one who died of the plague, and was hurried to the grave on the day of her death. These documents, therefore, are too decisive: they prove not the fact, but the forgery. Either the sonnet or the Virgilian note must be a falsification. The Abbé cites both as incontestably true; the consequent deduction is inevitable—they are both evidently false[1].

Secondly, Laura was never married, and was a haughty virgin rather than that *tender and prudent* wife who honoured Avignon by making that town the theatre of an honest French passion, and played off for one and twenty years her *little machinery* of alternate favours and refusals[2] upon the first poet of the age. It was, indeed, rather too unfair that a female should be made responsible for eleven children upon the faith of a misinterpreted abbreviation, and the decision of a librarian[3]. It is, however, satisfactory to think that the love of Petrarch was not platonic. The happiness which he prayed to possess but once and for a moment was surely not of the mind[4], and some-

1 The sonnet had before awakened the suspicions of Mr. Horace Walpole. See his letter to Wharton in 1763.

2 "Par ce petit manège, cette alternative de faveurs et de rigueurs bien ménagée, une femme tendre et sage amuse, pendant vingt et un ans, le plus grand poëte de son siècle, sans faire la moindre brêche à son honneur." Mém. pour la Vie de Pétrarque, Preface aux Francois. The Italian editor of the London edition of Petrarch, who has translated Lord Woodhouselee, renders the "femme tendre et sage" "*raffinata civetta.*" Riflessioni intorno a madonna Laura, p. 234, vol. iii. ed. 1811.

3 In a dialogue with St. Augustin, Petrarch has described Laura as having a body exhausted with repeated *ptubs*. The old editors read and printed *perturbationibus;* but Mr. Capperonier, librarian to the French king in 1762, who saw the MS. in the Paris library, made an attestation that "*on lit et qu'on doit lire, partubus exhaustum.*" De Sade joined the names of Messrs. Boudot and Bejot with Mr. Capperonier, and in the whole discussion on this *ptubs*, showed himself a downright literary rogue. See Riflessioni, &c. p. 267. Thomas Aquinas is called in to settle whether Petrarch's mistress was a *chaste* maid or a *continent* wife.

4 "Pigmalion, quanto lodar ti dei
Dell' imagine tua, se mille volte
N'avesti quel ch' i' sol una vorrei."
Sonetto 58. *quando giunse a Simon l'alto concetto*
Le Rime, &c. par. i. pag. 189. edit. Ven. 1756.

thing so very real as a marriage project, with one who has been idly called a shadowy nymph, may be, perhaps, detected in at least six places of his own sonnets[1]. The love of Petrarch was neither platonic nor poetical; and if in one passage of his works he calls it "amore veementeissimo ma unico ed onesto," he confesses in a letter to a friend, that it was guilty and perverse, that it absorbed him quite and mastered his heart[2].

In this case, however, he was perhaps alarmed for the culpability of his wishes; for the Abbé de Sade himself, who certainly would not have been scrupulously delicate if he could have proved his descent from Petrarch as well as Laura, is forced into a stout defence of his virtuous grandmother. As far as relates to the poet, we have no security for the innocence, except perhaps in the constancy of his pursuit. He assures us in his epistle to posterity, that, when arrived at his fortieth year, he not only had in horror, but had lost all recollection and image of any "irregularity[3]." But the birth of his natural daughter cannot be assigned earlier than his thirty-ninth year; and either the memory or the morality of the poet must have failed him, when he forgot or was guilty of this *slip*[4]. The weakest argument for the purity of this love has been drawn from the permanence of effects, which survived the object of his passion. The reflection of Mr. de la Bastie, that virtue alone is capable of making impressions which death cannot efface, is one of those which every body applauds, and every body finds not to be true, the moment he examines his own breast or the records of human feeling[5]. Such apophthegms can do nothing for Petrarch or for the cause of morality, except with

1 See Riflessioni, &c. p. 291.

2 "Quella rea e perversa passione che solo tutto mi occupava e mi regnava nel cuore."

3 *Azion dishonesta* are his words.

4 "A questa confessione cosi sincera diede forse occasione una nuova caduta ch' ei fece." Tiraboschi, Storia, &c. tom. v. lib. iv. par. ii. pag. 492.

5 "*Il n'y a que la vertu seule qui soit capable de faire des impressions que la mort n'efface pas.*" M. de Bimard, Baron de la Bastie, in the Memoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres for 1740 and 1751. See also Riflessioni, &c. p. 295.

the very weak and the very young. He that has made even a little progress beyond ignorance and pupilage, cannot be edified with any thing but truth. What is called vindicating the honour of an individual or a nation, is the most futile, tedious, and uninstructive of all writing; although it will always meet with more applause than that sober criticism, which is attributed to the malicious desire of reducing a great man to the common standard of humanity. It is, after all, not unlikely, that our historian was right in retaining his favourite hypothetic salvo, which secures the author, although it scarcely saves the honour of the still unknown mistress of Petrarch[1].

16.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died.
Stanza xxxi. line 1.

Petrarch retired to Arquà immediately on his return from the unsuccessful attempt to visit Urban V. at Rome, in the year 1370, and, with the exception of his celebrated visit to Venice in company with Francesco Novello da Carrara, he appears to have passed the four last years of his life between that charming solitude and Padua. For four months previous to his death he was in a state of continual languor, and in the morning of July the 19th, in the year 1374, was found dead in his library chair with his head resting upon a book. The chair is still shown amongst the precious relics of Arquà, which, from the uninterrupted veneration that has been attached to every thing relative to this great man from the moment of his death to the present hour, have, it may be hoped, a better chance of authenticity than the Shakesperian memorials of Stratford upon Avon.

Arquà (for the last syllable is accented in pronunciation, although the analogy of the English language has been observed in the verse) is twelve miles from Padua, and about three miles

[1] "And if the virtue or prudence of Laura was inexorable, he enjoyed, and might boast of enjoying the nymph of poetry." Decline and Fall, cap. lxx. p. 327. vol. xii. oct. Perhaps the *if* is here meant for *although*.

on the right of the high road to Rovigo, in the bosom of the Euganean hills. After a walk of twenty minutes across a flat well wooded meadow, you come to a little blue lake, clear, but fathomless, and to the foot of a succession of acclivities and hills, clothed with vineyards and orchards, rich with fir and pomegranate trees, and every sunny fruit shrub. From the banks of the lake the road winds into the hills, and the church of Arquà is soon seen between a cleft where two ridges slope towards each other, and nearly inclose the village. The houses are scattered at intervals on the steep sides of these summits; and that of the poet is on the edge of a little knoll overlooking two descents, and commanding a view not only of the glowing gardens in the dales immediately beneath, but of the wide plains, above whose low woods of mulberry and willow thickened into a dark mass by festoons of vines, tall single cypresses, and the spires of towns are seen in the distance, which stretches to the mouths of the Po and the shores of the Adriatic. The climate of these volcanic hills is warmer, and the vintage begins a week sooner than in the plains of Padua. Petrarch is laid, for he cannot be said to be buried, in a sarcophagus of red marble, raised on four pilasters on an elevated base, and preserved from an association with meaner tombs. It stands conspicuously alone, but will be soon overshadowed by four lately planted laurels. Petrarch's Fountain, for here every thing is Petrarch's, springs and expands itself beneath an artificial arch, a little below the church, and abounds plentifully, in the driest season, with that soft water which was the ancient wealth of the Euganean hills. It would be more attractive, were it not, in some seasons, beset with hornets and wasps. No other coincidence could assimilate the tombs of Petrarch and Archilochus. The revolutions of centuries have spared these sequestered valleys, and the only violence which has been offered to the ashes of Petrarch was prompted, not by hate, but veneration. An attempt was made to rob the sarcophagus of its treasure, and one of the arms was stolen by a Florentine through a rent which is still visible. The injury is not forgotten, but has served to identify the poet with the country where he was born, but where he would not

live. A peasant boy of Arquà being asked who Petrarch was, replied, "that the people of the parsonage knew all about him, but that he only knew that he was a Florentine."

Mr. Forsyth[1] was not quite correct in saying that Petrarch never returned to Tuscany after he had once quitted it when a boy. It appears he did pass through Florence on his way from Parma to Rome, and on his return in the year 1350, and remained there long enough to form some acquaintance with its most distinguished inhabitants. A Florentine gentleman, ashamed of the aversion of the poet for his native country, was eager to point out this trivial error in our accomplished traveller, whom he knew and respected for an extraordinary capacity, extensive erudition, and refined taste, joined to that engaging simplicity of manners which has been so frequently recognized as the surest, though it is certainly not an indispensable, trait of superior genius.

Every footstep of Laura's lover has been anxiously traced and recorded. The house in which he lodged is shown in Venice. The inhabitants of Arezzo, in order to decide the ancient controversy between their city and the neighbouring Ancisa, where Petrarch was carried when seven months old, and remained until his seventh year, have designated by a long inscription the spot where their great fellow citizen was born. A tablet has been raised to him at Parma, in the chapel of St. Agatha, at the cathedral[2], because he was archdeacon of that

[1] Remarks, &c. on Italy, p. 95, note, 2d edit.

[2] D. O. M.
Francisco Petrarchæ
Parmensi Archidiacono.
Parentibus præclaris genere perantiquo
Ethices Christianæ scriptori eximio
Romanæ linguæ restitutori
Etruscæ principi
Africæ ob carmen hâc in urbe peractum regibus accito
S. P. Q. R. laurea donato.
Tanti Viri
Juvenilium juvenis senilium senex
Studiosissimus
Comes Nicolaus Canonicus Cicognarus
Marmoream proxima ara excitata.

society, and was only snatched from his intended sepulture in their church by a *foreign* death. Another tablet with a bust has been erected to him at Pavia, on account of his having passed the autumn of 1368 in that city, with his son-in-law Brossano. The political condition which has for ages precluded the Italians from the criticism of the living, has concentrated their attention to the illustration of the dead.

17.

Or, it may be, with demons.
Stanza xxxiv. line 1.

The struggle is to the full as likely to be with demons as with our better thoughts. Satan chose the wilderness for the temptation of our Saviour. And our unsullied John Locke preferred the presence of a child to complete solitude.

18.

In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire;
And Boileau, whose rash envy, &c.
Stanza xxxviii. lines 6 and 7.

Perhaps the couplet in which Boileau depreciates Tasso, may serve as well as any other specimen to justify the opinion given of the harmony of French verse.

A Malerbe, à Racan, préfére Theophile,
Et le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile.
Sat. ix. vers. 176.

The biographer Serassi[1], out of tenderness to the reputation either of the Italian or the French poet, is eager to observe that

Ibique condito
Divæ Januariæ cruento corpore
H. M. P.
Suffectum
Sed infra meritum Francisci sepulchro
Summa hac in æde efferri mandantis
Si Parmæ occumberet
Extera morte heu nobis erepti.

1 La Vita del Tasso, lib. iii. p. 284. tom. ii. edit. Bergamo, 1790.

the satirist recanted or explained away this censure, and subsequently allowed the author of the Jerusalem to be a "genius, sublime, vast, and happily born for the higher flights of poetry." To this we will add, that the recantation is far from satisfactory, when we examine the whole anecdote as reported by Olivet[1]. The sentence pronounced against him by Bohours[2] is recorded only to the confusion of the critic, whose *palinodia* the Italian makes no effort to discover, and would not perhaps accept. As to the opposition which the Jerusalem encountered from the Cruscan academy, who degraded Tasso from all competition with Ariosto, below Bojardo and Pulci, the disgrace of such opposition must also in some measure be laid to the charge of Alfonso, and the court of Ferrara. For Leonard Salviati, the principal and nearly the sole origin of this attack, was, there can be no doubt[3], influenced by a hope to acquire the favour of the House of Este: an object which he thought attainable by exalting the reputation of a native poet at the expense of a rival, then a *prisoner of state*. The hopes and efforts of Salviati must serve to show the cotemporary opinion as to the nature of the poet's imprisonment; and will fill up the measure of our indignation at the tyrant jailer[4]. In fact, the antagonist of Tasso was not disappointed in the reception given to his criticism; he was called to the court of Ferrara, where, having endeavoured to heighten his claims to favour, by panegyrics on

[1] Histoire de l'Academie Françoise depuis 1652 jusqu'à 1700, par l'abbé d'Olivet, p. 181, edit. Amsterdam, 1730. "Mais, ensuite, venant à l'usage qu'il a fait de ses talens, j'aurois montré que le bon sens n'est pas toujours ce qui domine chez lui," p. 182. Boileau said he had not changed his opinion. "J'en ai si peu changé, dit il," &c. p. 181.

[2] La manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages de l'esprit, sec. dial. p. 89, edit. 1692. Philanthes is for Tasso, and says in the outset, "de tous les beaux esprits que l'Italie a portés, le Tasse est peut-être celui qui pense le plus noblement." But Bohours seems to speak in Eudoxus, who closes with the absurd comparison: "Faites valoir le Tasse tant qu'il vous plaira, je m'en tiens pour moi à Virgile," &c. Ibid. p. 102.

[3] La Vita, &c. lib. iii. p. 90, tom. ii. The English reader may see an account of the opposition of the Crusca to Tasso, in Dr. Black, Life, &c. cap. xvii. vol. ii.

[4] For further, and, it is hoped, decisive proof, that Tasso was neither more nor less than a *prisoner of state*, the reader is referred to "*Historica Illustrations of the IVth Canto of Childe Harold*," pag. 5, and following.

the family of his sovereign [1], he was in turn abandoned, and expired in neglected poverty. The opposition of the Cruscans was brought to a close in six years after the commencement of the controversy; and if the academy owed its first renown to having almost opened with such a paradox [2], it is probable that, on the other hand, the care of his reputation alleviated rather than aggravated the imprisonment of the injured poet. The defence of his father and of himself, for both were involved in the censure of Salviati, found employment for many of his solitary hours, and the captive could have been but little embarrassed to reply to accusations, where, amongst other delinquencies, he was charged with invidiously omitting, in his comparison between France and Italy, to make any mention of the cupola of St. Maria del Fiore at Florence [3]. The late biographer of Ariosto seems as if willing to renew the controversy by doubting the interpretation of Tasso's self-estimation [4] related in Serassi's life of the poet. But Tiraboschi had before laid that rivalry at rest [5], by showing, that between Ariosto and Tasso it is not a question of comparison, but of preference.

19.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves.

Stanza xli. lines 1 and 2.

Before the remains of Ariosto were removed from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust, which surmounted the tomb, was struck by lightning, and a crown of iron

1 Orazioni funebri . . . delle lodi di Don Luigi Cardinal d'Este . . . delle lodi di Donno Alfonso d'Este. See La Vita, lib. iii. p. 117.

2 It was founded in 1582, and the Cruscan answer to Pellegrino's *Caraffa* or *epica poesia* was published in 1584.

3 " Cotanto potè sempre in lui il veleno della sua pessima volontà contro alla nazion Fiorentina." La Vita, lib. iii. p. 96. 98, tom. ii.

4 La Vita di M. L. Ariosto, scritta dall' Abate Girolamo Baruffaldi Giuniore, &c., Ferrara, 1807, lib. iii. p. 262. See Historical Illustrations, &c. p. 26.

5 Storia della Lett. &c. lib. iii. tom. vii. par. iii. p. 1220. sect. 4.

laurels melted away. The event has been recorded by a writer of the last century[1]. The transfer of these sacred ashes on the 6th of June, 1801, was one of the most brilliant spectacles of the short-lived Italian Republic; and to consecrate the memory of the ceremony, the once famous fallen *Intrepidi* were revived and re-formed into the Ariostean academy. The large public place through which the procession paraded was then for the first time called Ariosto Square. The author of the Orlando is jealously claimed as the Homer, not of Italy, but Ferrara[2]. The mother of Ariosto was of Reggio, and the house in which he was born is carefully distinguished by a tablet with these words: "*Qui nacque Ludovico Ariosto il giorno 8 di Settembre dell' anno* 1474." But the Ferrarese make light of the accident by which their poet was born abroad, and claim him exclusively for their own. They possess his bones, they show his arm-chair, and his inkstand, and his autographs.

"..... Hic illius arma
Hic currus fuit....."

The house where he lived, the room where he died, are designated by his own replaced memorial[3], and by a recent inscription. The Ferrarese are more jealous of their claims since the animosity of Denina, arising from a cause which their apologists mysteriously hint is not unknown to them, ventured to degrade their soil and climate to a Bœotian incapacity for all spiritual productions. A quarto volume has been called forth by the detraction, and this supplement to Barotti's Memoirs of the illustrious Ferrarese has been considered a

[1] "Mi raccontarono que' monaci, ch' essendo caduto un fulmine nella loro chiesa schiantò esso dalle tempie la corona di lauro a quell' immortale poeta." Op. di Bianconi, vol. iii. p. 176. ed. Milano, 1802; lettera al Signor Guido Savini Arcifisiocritico, sull' indole di un fulmine caduto in Dresda l'anno 1759.

[2] "Appassionato ammiratore ed invitto apologista dell' *Omero Ferrarese*." The title was first given by Tasso, and is quoted to the confusion of the *Tassisti*, lib. iii. pp. 262, 265. La Vita di M. L. Ariosto, &c.

[3] "Parva sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non
Sordida, parta meo sed tamen ære domus."

triumphant reply to the "Quadro Storico Statistico dell' Alta Italia."

20.

For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves.

Stanza xli. lines 4 and 5.

The eagle, the sea calf, the laurel[1], and the white vine[2], were amongst the most approved preservatives against lightning: Jupiter chose the first, Augustus Cæsar the second[3], and Tiberius never failed to wear a wreath of the third when the sky threatened a thunder-storm[4]. These superstitions may be received without a sneer in a country where the magical properties of the hazel twig have not lost all their credit; and perhaps the reader may not be much surprised to find that a commentator on Suetonius has taken upon himself gravely to disprove the imputed virtues of the crown of Tiberius, by mentioning that a few years before he wrote a laurel was actually struck by lightning at Rome[5].

21.

Know that the lightning sanctifies below.

Stanza xli. line 8.

The Curtian lake and the Ruminal fig-tree in the Forum, having been touched by lightning, were held sacred, and the memory of the accident was preserved by a *puteal*, or altar, resembling the mouth of a well, with a little chapel covering the cavity supposed to be made by the thunderbolt. Bodies scathed and persons struck dead were thought to be incorruptible[6]; and a stroke not fatal conferred perpetual dignity upon the man so distinguished by heaven[7].

1 Aquila, vitulus marinus, et laurus, fulmine non feriuntur. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. cap. lv.

2 Columella, lib. x.

3 Sueton. in Vit. August. cap. xc.

4 Sueton. in Vit. Tiberii, cap. lxix.

5 Note 2. p. 409. edit. Lugd. Bat. 1667.

6 Vid. J. C. Bullenger, de Terræ Motu et Fulminib. lib. v. cap. xi.

7 Ὀυδεὶς κεραυνωθεὶς ἄτιμος ἐστι, ὅθεν καὶ ὡς θεὸς τιμᾶται. Plut. Sympos. vid. J. C. Bulleng. ut sup.

Those killed by lightning were wrapped in a white garment, and buried where they fell. The superstition was not confined to the worshippers of Jupiter: the Lombards believed in the omens furnished by lightning, and a Christian priest confesses that, by a diabolical skill in interpreting thunder, a seer foretold to Agilulf, duke of Turin, an event which came to pass, and gave him a queen and a crown[1]. There was, however, something equivocal in this sign, which the ancient inhabitants of Rome did not always consider propitious; and as the fears are likely to last longer than the consolations of superstition, it is not strange that the Romans of the age of Leo X. should have been so much terrified at some misinterpreted storms as to require the exhortations of a scholar, who arrayed all the learning on thunder and lightning to prove the omen favourable: beginning with the flash which struck the walls of Velitræ, and including that which played upon a gate at Florence, and foretold the pontificate of one of its citizens[2].

22.

Italia! oh Italia! &c.

Stanza xlii. line 1.

The two stanzas, XLII. and XLIII., are, with the exception of a line or two, a translation of the famous sonnet of Filicaja:

"Italia, Italia, O tu cui feo la sorte."

23.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind.

Stanza xliv. lines 1 and 2.

The celebrated letter of Servius Sulpicius to Cicero on the death of his daughter describes as it then was, and now is, a path which I often traced in Greece, both by sea and land, in different journeys and voyages.

1 Pauli Diaconi, de Gestis Langobard. lib. iii. cap. xiv. fo. 15. edit. Taurin. 1527.

2 I. P. Valeriani, de fulminum significationibus declamatio, ap. Græv. Antiq. Rom. tom. v. p. 593. The declamation is addressed to Julian of Medicis.

" On my return from Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me: Ægina was behind, Megara before me; Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left; all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now lie overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight, I could not but think presently within myself, Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcasses of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view[1]."

24.

And we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form.
Stanza xlvi. lines 7 and 8.

It is Poggio who, looking from the Capitoline hill upon ruined Rome, breaks forth into the exclamation, " Ut nunc omni decore nudata, prostrata jacet, instar gigantei cadaveris corrupti atque undique exesi[2]."

25.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone.
Stanza xlix. line 1.

The view of the Venus of Medicis instantly suggests the lines in the *Seasons*, and the comparison of the object with the description proves, not only the correctness of the portrait, but the peculiar turn of thought, and, if the term may be used, the sexual imagination of the descriptive poet. The same conclusion may be deduced from another hint in the same episode of Musidora; for Thomson's notion of the privileges of favoured love must have been either very primitive, or rather deficient in delicacy, when he made his grateful nymph

1 Dr. Middleton—History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero, sect. vii. p. 371. vol. ii.

2 De fortunæ varietate urbis Romæ, et de ruinis ejusdem descriptio, ap. Sallengre, Thesaur. tom. i. p. 501.

inform her discreet Damon that in some happier moment he might perhaps be the companion of her bath:

"The time may come you need not fly."

The reader will recollect the anecdote told in the life of Dr. Johnson. We will not leave the Florentine gallery without a word on the *Whetter*. It seems strange that the character of that disputed statue should not be entirely decided, at least in the mind of any one who has seen a sarcophagus in the vestibule of the Basilica of St. Paul without the walls, at Rome, where the whole group of the fable of Marsyas is seen in tolerable preservation; and the Scythian slave whetting the knife is represented exactly in the same position as this celebrated masterpiece. The slave is not naked; but it is easier to get rid of this difficulty than to suppose the knife in the hand of the Florentine statue an instrument for shaving, which it must be, if, as Lanzi supposes, the man is no other than the barber of Julius Cæsar. Winkelmann, illustrating a bas relief of the same subject, follows the opinion of Leonard Agostini, and his authority might have been thought conclusive, even if the resemblance did not strike the most careless observer[1].

Amongst the bronzes of the same princely collection, is still to be seen the inscribed tablet copied and commented upon by Mr. Gibbon[2]. Our historian found some difficulties, but did not desist from his illustration: he might be vexed to hear that his criticism has been thrown away on an inscription now generally recognized to be a forgery.

26.

His eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek.

Stanza li. lines 6 and 7.

Ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐστιᾶν.

"Atque oculos pascat uterque suos."
Ovid. Amor. lib. ii.

[1] See Monim. Ant. ined. par. i. cap. xvii. n. xlii. pag. 50; and Storia delle Arti, &c. lib. xi. cap. l. tom. ii. pag. 314. not. B.

[2] Nomina gentesque Antiquæ Italiæ, p. 204. edit. oct.

27.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie.

Stanza liv. line 1.

This name will recal the memory, not only of those whose tombs have raised the Santa Croce into the centre of pilgrimage, the Mecca of Italy, but of her whose eloquence was poured over the illustrious ashes, and whose voice is now as mute as those she sung. CORINNA is no more; and with her should expire the fear, the flattery, and the envy, which threw too dazzling or too dark a cloud round the march of genius, and forbad the steady gaze of disinterested criticism. We have her picture embellished or distorted, as friendship or detraction has held the pencil: the impartial portrait was hardly to be expected from a cotemporary. The immediate voice of her survivors will, it is probable, be far from affording a just estimate of her singular capacity. The gallantry, the love of wonder, and the hope of associated fame, which blunted the edge of censure, must cease to exist.—The dead have no sex; they can surprise by no new miracles; they can confer no privilege: Corinna has ceased to be a woman—she is only an author: and it may be foreseen that many will repay themselves for former complaisance, by a severity to which the extravagance of previous praises may perhaps give the colour of truth. The latest posterity, for to the latest posterity they will assuredly descend, will have to pronounce upon her various productions; and the longer the vista through which they are seen, the more accurately minute will be the object, the more certain the justice, of the decision. She will enter into that existence in which the great writers of all ages and nations are, as it were, associated in a world of their own, and, from that superior sphere, shed their eternal influence for the control and consolation of mankind. But the individual will gradually disappear as the author is more distinctly seen: some one, therefore, of all those whom the charms of involuntary wit, and of easy hospitality, attracted within the friendly circles of Coppet, should rescue from oblivion those virtues which, although they are said to love the shade, are, in fact, more frequently chilled than excited by the domestic cares of private life. Some one should be found

to portray the unaffected graces with which she adorned those dearer relationships, the performance of whose duties is rather discovered amongst the interior secrets, than seen in the outward management, of family intercourse; and which, indeed, it requires the delicacy of genuine affection to qualify for the eye of an indifferent spectator. Some one should be found, not to celebrate, but to describe, the amiable mistress of an open mansion, the centre of a society, ever varied, and always pleased, the creator of which, divested of the ambition and the arts of public rivalry, shone forth only to give fresh animation to those around her. The mother tenderly affectionate and tenderly beloved, the friend unboundedly generous, but still esteemed, the charitable patroness of all distress, cannot be forgotten by those whom she cherished, and protected, and fed. Her loss will be mourned the most where she was known the best; and, to the sorrows of very many friends and more dependents, may be offered the disinterested regret of a stranger, who, amidst the sublimer scenes of the Leman lake, received his chief satisfaction from contemplating the engaging qualities of the incomparable Corinna.

28.

Here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones.
Stanza liv. lines 6 and 7.

Alfieri is the great name of this age. The Italians, without waiting for the hundred years, consider him as "a poet good in law."—His memory is the more dear to them because he is the bard of freedom; and because, as such, his tragedies can receive no countenance from any of their sovereigns. They are but very seldom, and but very few of them, allowed to be acted. It was observed by Cicero, that nowhere were the true opinions and feelings of the Romans so clearly shown as at the theatre [1].

[1] The free expression of their honest sentiments survived their liberties. Titius, the friend of Antony, presented them with games in the theatre of Pompey. They did not suffer the brilliancy of the spectacle to efface from their memory that the man who furnished them with the entertainment had murdered the son of Pompey: they drove him from the theatre with curses.

In the autumn of 1816, a celebrated improvvisatore exhibited his talents at the Opera-house of Milan. The reading of the theses handed in for the subjects of his poetry was received by a very numerous audience, for the most part in silence, or with laughter; but when the assistant, unfolding one of the papers, exclaimed, "*The apotheosis of Victor Alfieri*," the whole theatre burst into a shout, and the applause was continued for some moments. The lot did not fall on Alfieri; and the Signor Sgricci had to pour forth his extemporary common-places on the bombardment of Algiers. The choice, indeed, is not left to accident quite so much as might be thought from a first view of the ceremony; and the police not only takes care to look at the papers beforehand, but, in case of any prudential afterthought, steps in to correct the blindness of chance. The proposal for deifying Alfieri was received with immediate enthusiasm, the rather because it was conjectured there would be no opportunity of carrying it into effect.

29.

Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.
Stanza liv. line 9.

The affectation of simplicity in sepulchral inscriptions, which so often leaves us uncertain whether the structure before us is an actual depository, or a cenotaph, or a simple memorial not of death but life, has given to the tomb of Machiavelli no information as to the place or time of the birth or death, the age or parentage, of the historian.

TANTO NOMINI NVLLVM PAR ELOGIVM
NICCOLAVS MACHIAVELLI.

There seems at least no reason why the name should not have been put above the sentence which alludes to it.

The moral sense of a populace, spontaneously expressed, is never wrong. Even the soldiers of the triumvirs joined in the execration of the citizens, by shouting round the chariots of Lepidus and Plancus, who had proscribed their brothers, *De Germanis non de Gallis duo triumphant Consules;* a saying worth a record, were it nothing but a good pun. [C. Vell. Paterculi Hist. lib. ii. cap. lxxix. pag. 78. edit. Elzevir, 1639. Ibid. lib. ii. cap. lxxvii.]

It will readily be imagined that the prejudices which have passed the name of Machiavelli into an epithet proverbial of iniquity, exist no longer at Florence. His memory was persecuted as his life had been for an attachment to liberty incompatible with the new system of despotism, which succeeded the fall of the free governments of Italy. He was put to the torture for being a "*libertine*," that is, for wishing to restore the republic of Florence; and such are the undying efforts of those who are interested in the perversion not only of the nature of actions, but the meaning of words, that what was once *patriotism*, has by degrees come to signify *debauch*. We have ourselves outlived the old meaning of "liberality," which is now another word for treason in one country and for infatuation in all. It seems to have been a strange mistake to accuse the author of the Prince, as being a pander to tyranny; and to think that the Inquisition would condemn his work for such a delinquency. The fact is that Machiavelli, as is usual with those against whom no crime can be proved, was suspected of and charged with atheism; and the first and last most violent opposers of the Prince were both Jesuits, one of whom persuaded the Inquisition "benchè fosse tardo," to prohibit the treatise, and the other qualified the secretary of the Florentine republic as no better than a fool. The father Possevin was proved never to have read the book, and the father Lucchesini not to have understood it. It is clear, however, that such critics must have objected not to the slavery of the doctrines, but to the supposed tendency of a lesson which shows how distinct are the interests of a monarch from the happiness of mankind. The Jesuits are re-established in Italy, and the last chapter of the Prince may again call forth a particular refutation, from those who are employed once more in moulding the minds of the rising generation, so as to receive the impressions of despotism. The chapter bears for title, "Esortazione a liberare la Italia dai Barbari," and concludes with a *libertine* excitement to the future redemption of Italy. "*Non si deve adunque lasciar passare questa occasione, acciocchè la Italia vegga dopo tanto tempo apparire un suo redentore. Nè posso esprimere con qual amore ei fusse ricevuto in tutte quelle provincie, che hanno*

patito per queste illuvioni esterne, con qual sete di vendetta, con che ostinata fede, con che lacrime. Quali porte se li serrerebeno? Quali popoli li negherebbeno la obbedienza? Quale Italiano li negherebbe l'ossequio? AD OGNUNO PUZZA QUESTO BARBARO DOMINIO [1]."

30.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar.

Stanza lvii. line 1.

Dante was born in Florence in the year 1261. He fought in two battles, was fourteen times ambassador, and once prior of the republic. When the party of Charles of Anjou triumphed over the Bianchi, he was absent on an embassy to Pope Boniface VIII., and was condemned to two years' banishment, and to a fine of 8000 lire; on the non-payment of which he was further punished by the sequestration of all his property. The republic, however, was not content with this satisfaction, for in 1772 was discovered in the archives at Florence a sentence in which Dante is the eleventh of a list of fifteen condemned in 1302 to be burnt alive; *Talis perveniens igne comburatur sic quod moriatur.* The pretext for this judgment was a proof of unfair barter, extortions, and illicit gains. *Baracteriarum iniquarum, extorsionum, et illicitorum lucrorum* [2], and with such an accusation it is not strange that Dante should have always protested his innocence, and the injustice of his fellow-citizens. His appeal to Florence was accompanied by another to the Emperor Henry, and the death of that sovereign in 1313 was the signal for a sentence of irrevocable banishment. He had before lingered near Tuscany with hopes of recall; then travelled into the north of Italy, where Verona had to boast of his longest residence; and he finally settled at Ravenna, which was his ordinary but not constant abode until his death. The refusal of the Venetians to grant him a public audience, on the part of Guido Novello da Polenta his pro-

[1] Il Principe di Niccolò Machiavelli, &c. con la prefazione e le note istoriche e politiche di Mr. Amelot de la Houssaye e l'esame e confutazione dell' opera .... Cosmopoli, 1769.

[2] Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. v. lib. iii. par. 2. p. 448. Tiraboschi is incorrect: the dates of the three decrees against Dante are A. D. 1302, 1314, and 1316.

tector, is said to have been the principal cause of this event, which happened in 1321. He was buried (" in sacra minorum æde") at Ravenna, in a handsome tomb, which was erected by Guido, restored by Bernardo Bembo in 1483, prætor for that republic which had refused to hear him, again restored by Cardinal Corsi in 1692, and replaced by a more magnificent sepulchre, constructed in 1780, at the expense of the Cardinal Luigi Valenti Gonzaga. The offence or misfortune of Dante was an attachment to a defeated party, and, as his least favourable biographers allege against him, too great a freedom of speech and haughtiness of manner. But the next age paid honours almost divine to the exile. The Florentines, having in vain and frequently attempted to recover his body, crowned his image in a church[1], and his picture is still one of the idols of their cathedral. They struck medals, they raised statues to him. The cities of Italy, not being able to dispute about his own birth, contended for that of his great poem, and the Florentines thought it for their honour to prove that he had finished the seventh Canto, before they drove him from his native city. Fifty-one years after his death, they endowed a professorial chair for the expounding of his verses, and Boccaccio was appointed to this patriotic employment. The example was imitated by Bologna and Pisa, and the commentators, if they performed but little service to literature, augmented the veneration which beheld a sacred or moral allegory in all the images of his mystic muse. His birth and his infancy were discovered to have been distinguished above those of ordinary men: the author of the Decameron, his earliest biographer, relates that his mother was warned in a dream of the importance of her pregnancy; and it was found, by others, that at ten years of age he had manifested his precocious passion for that wisdom or theology, which, under the name of Beatrice, had been mistaken for a substantial mistress. When the Divine Comedy had been recognized as a mere mortal production, and at the distance of two centuries, when criticism and competition had sobered the judgment of Italians, Dante was seriously

[1] So relates Ficino, but some think his coronation only an allegory. See Storia, &c. ut sup. p. 453.

declared superior to Homer[1]; and though the preference appeared to some casuists "an heretical blasphemy worthy of the flames," the contest was vigorously maintained for nearly fifty years. In later times it was made a question which of the Lords of Verona could boast of having patronised him[2], and the jealous scepticism of one writer would not allow Ravenna the undoubted possession of his bones. Even the critical Tiraboschi was inclined to believe that the poet had foreseen and foretold one of the discoveries of Galileo.—Like the great originals of other nations, his popularity has not always maintained the same level. The last age seemed inclined to undervalue him as a model and a study; and Bettinelli one day rebuked his pupil Monti, for poring over the harsh and obsolete extravagances of the Commedia. The present generation, having recovered from the Gallic idolatries of Cesarotti, has returned to the ancient worship, and the *Danteggiare* of the northern Italians is thought even indiscreet by the more moderate Tuscans.

There is still much curious information relative to the life and writings of this great poet which has not as yet been collected even by the Italians; but the celebrated Ugo Foscolo meditates to supply this defect, and it is not to be regretted that this national work has been reserved for one so devoted to his country and the cause of truth.

31.

Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed, &c.

Stanza lvii. lines 2, 3, and 4.

The elder Scipio Africanus had a tomb if he was not buried at Liternum, whither he had retired to voluntary banishment. This tomb was near the sea-shore, and the story of an inscription upon it, *Ingrata Patria*, having given a name to a modern

[1] By Varchi in his Ercolano. The controversy continued from 1570 to 1616. See Storia, &c. tom. vii. lib. iii. par. iii. p. 1280.

[2] Gio. Jacopo Dionisi Canonico di Verona. Serie di Aneddoti, n. 2. See Storia, &c. tom. v. lib. i. par. i. p. 24.

tower, is, if not true, an agreeable fiction. If he was not buried, he certainly lived there [1].

> In così angusta e solitaria villa
> Era 'l grand' uomo che d'Africa s'appella
> Perchè prima col ferro al vivo aprillà [2].

Ingratitude is generally supposed the vice peculiar to republics; and it seems to be forgotten that for one instance of popular inconstancy, we have a hundred examples of the fall of courtly favourites. Besides, a people have often repented—a monarch seldom or never. Leaving apart many familiar proofs of this fact, a short story may show the difference between even an aristocracy and the multitude.

Vettor Pisani, having been defeated in 1354 at Porto-longo, and many years afterwards in the more decisive action of Pola, by the Genoese, was recalled by the Venetian government, and thrown into chains. The Avvogadori proposed to behead him, but the supreme tribunal was content with the sentence of imprisonment. Whilst Pisani was suffering this unmerited disgrace, Chioza, in the vicinity of the capital [3], was, by the assistance of the *Signor of Padua*, delivered into the hands of Pietro Doria. At the intelligence of that disaster, the great bell of St. Mark's tower tolled to arms, and the people and the soldiery of the galleys were summoned to the repulse of the approaching enemy; but they protested they would not move a step, unless Pisani were liberated and placed at their head. The great council was instantly assembled: the prisoner was called before them, and the Doge, Andrea Contarini, informed him of the demands of the people and the necessities of the state, whose only hope of safety was reposed on his efforts, and who implored him to forget the indignities he had endured in her service. "I have submitted," replied the magnanimous republican, "I have submitted to your deliberations without complaint; I have supported patiently the pains of imprison-

[1] Vitam Literni egit sine desiderio urbis. See T. Liv. Hist. lib. xxxviii. Livy reports that some said he was buried at Liternum, others at Rome. Ib. cap. lv.

[2] Trionfo della Castità.

[3] See note 8, page 85.

ment, for they were inflicted at your command: this is no time to inquire whether I deserved them—the good of the republic may have seemed to require it, and that which the republic resolves is always resolved wisely. Behold me ready to lay down my life for the preservation of my country." Pisani was appointed generalissimo, and by his exertions, in conjunction with those of Carlo Zeno, the Venetians soon recovered the ascendancy over their maritime rivals.

The Italian communities were no less unjust to their citizens than the Greek republics. Liberty, both with the one and the other, seems to have been a national, not an individual object; and, notwithstanding the boasted *equality before the laws* which an ancient Greek writer[1] considered the great distinctive mark between his countrymen and the barbarians, the mutual rights of fellow-citizens seem never to have been the principal scope of the old democracies. The world may have not yet seen an essay by the author of the Italian Republics, in which the distinction between the liberty of former states, and the signification attached to that word by the happier constitution of England, is ingeniously developed. The Italians, however, when they had ceased to be free, still looked back with a sigh upon those times of turbulence, when every citizen might rise to a share of sovereign power, and have never been taught fully to appreciate the repose of a monarchy. Sperone Speroni, when Francis Maria II. Duke of Rovere proposed the question, "which was preferable, the republic or the principality—the perfect and not durable, or the less perfect and not so liable to change," replied, "that our happiness is to be measured by its quality, not by its duration; and that he preferred to live for one day like a man, than for a hundred years like a brute, a stock, or a stone." This was thought, and called, a *magnificent* answer, down to the last days of Italian servitude[2].

[1] The Greek boasted that he was ἰσονόμος See—the last chapter of the first book of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

[2] "E intorno *alla magnifica risposta*," &c. Serassi Vita del Tasso, lib. iii. pag. 149. tom. ii. edit. 2. Bergamo.

32.

And the crown
Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown.

Stanza lvii. lines 6, 7, and 8.

The Florentines did not take the opportunity of Petrarch's short visit to their city in 1350 to revoke the decree which confiscated the property of his father, who had been banished shortly after the exile of Dante. His crown did not dazzle them; but when in the next year they were in want of his assistance in the formation of their university, they repented of their injustice, and Boccaccio was sent to Padua to intreat the laureate to conclude his wanderings in the bosom of his native country, where he might finish his *immortal Africa*, and enjoy, with his recovered possessions, the esteem of all classes of his fellow-citizens. They gave him the option of the book and the science he might condescend to expound: they called him the glory of his country, who was dear, and would be dearer to them; and they added, that if there was any thing unpleasing in their letter, he ought to return amongst them, were it only to correct their style[1]. Petrarch seemed at first to listen to the flattery and to the intreaties of his friend, but he did not return to Florence, and preferred a pilgrimage to the tomb of Laura and the shades of Vaucluse.

33.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed
His dust.

Stanza lviii. lines 1 and 2.

Boccaccio was buried in the church of St. Michael and St. James, at Certaldo, a small town in the Valdelsa, which was by some supposed the place of his birth. There he passed the latter part of his life in a course of laborious study, which shortened his existence; and there might his ashes have been

1 "Accingiti innoltre, se ci è lecito ancor l'esortarti, a compire l'immortal tua Africa . . . Se ti avviene d'incontrare nel nostro stile cosa che ti dispiaccia, ciò debb' essere un altro motivo ad esaudire i desiderj della tua patria." Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. v. par. i. lib. i. pag. 76.

secure, if not of honour, at least of repose. But the "hyæna bigots" of Certaldo tore up the tombstone of Boccaccio, and ejected it from the holy precincts of St. Michael and St. James. The occasion, and, it may be hoped, the excuse, of this ejectment was the making of a new floor for the church; but the fact is, that the tombstone was taken up and thrown aside at the bottom of the building. Ignorance may share the sin with bigotry. It would be painful to relate such an exception to the devotion of the Italians for their great names, could it not be accompanied by a trait more honourably conformable to the general character of the nation. The principal person of the district, the last branch of the house of Medicis, afforded that protection to the memory of the insulted dead which her best ancestors had dispensed upon all cotemporary merit. The Marchioness Lenzoni rescued the tombstone of Boccaccio from the neglect in which it had sometime lain, and found for it an honourable elevation in her own mansion. She has done more: the house in which the poet lived has been as little respected as his tomb, and is falling to ruin over the head of one indifferent to the name of its former tenant. It consists of two or three little chambers, and a low tower, on which Cosmo II. affixed an inscription. This house she has taken measures to purchase, and proposes to devote to it that care and consideration which are attached to the cradle and to the roof of genius.

This is not the place to undertake the defence of Boccaccio; but the man who exhausted his little patrimony in the acquirement of learning, who was amongst the first, if not the first, to allure the science and the poetry of Greece to the bosom of Italy;—who not only invented a new style, but founded, or certainly fixed, a new language; who, besides the esteem of every polite court of Europe, was thought worthy of employment by the predominant republic of his own country, and, what is more, of the friendship of Petrarch, who lived the life of a philosopher and a freeman, and who died in the pursuit of knowledge,—such a man might have found more consideration than he has met with from the priest of Certaldo, and from a late English traveller, who strikes off his portrait as an odious, contemptible, licentious writer, whose impure

remains should be suffered to rot without a record[1]. That English traveller, unfortunately for those who have to deplore the loss of a very amiable person, is beyond all criticism; but the mortality which did not protect Boccaccio from Mr. Eustace, must not defend Mr. Eustace from the impartial judgment of his successors.—Death may canonize his virtues, not his errors; and it may be modestly pronounced that he transgressed, not only as an author, but as a man, when he evoked the shade of Boccaccio in company with that of Aretine, amidst the sepulchres of Santa Croce, merely to dismiss it with indignity. As far as respects

"Il flagello de' Principi,
Il divin Pietro Aretino,"

it is of little import what censure is passed upon a coxcomb who owes his present existence to the above burlesque character given to him by the poet whose amber has preserved many other grubs and worms: but to classify Boccaccio with such a person, and to excommunicate his very ashes, must of itself make us doubt of the qualification of the classical tourist for writing upon Italian, or, indeed, upon any other literature; for ignorance on one point may incapacitate an author merely for that particular topic, but subjection to a professional prejudice must render him an unsafe director on all occasions. Any perversion and injustice may be made what is vulgarly called "a case of conscience," and this poor excuse is all that

[1] Classical Tour, cap. ix. vol. ii. p. 355. edit. 3d. "Of Boccaccio, the modern Petronius, we say nothing; the abuse of genius is more odious and more contemptible than its absence; and it imports little where the impure remains of a licentious author are consigned to their kindred dust. For the same reason the traveller may pass unnoticed the tomb of the malignant Aretino."

This dubious phrase is hardly enough to save the tourist from the suspicion of another blunder respecting the burial-place of Aretine, whose tomb was in the church of St. Luke at Venice, and gave rise to the famous controversy of which some notice is taken in Bayle. Now the words of Mr. Eustace would lead us to think the tomb was at Florence, or at least was to be somewhere recognized. Whether the inscription so much disputed was ever written on the tomb cannot now be decided, for all memorial of this author has disappeared from the church of St. Luke.

can be offered for the priest of Certaldo, or the author of the Classical Tour. It would have answered the purpose to confine the censure to the novels of Boccaccio, and gratitude to that source which supplied the muse of Dryden with her last and most harmonious numbers might perhaps have restricted that censure to the objectionable qualities of the hundred tales. At any rate the repentance of Boccaccio might have arrested his exhumation, and it should have been recollected and told, that in his old age he wrote a letter intreating his friend to discourage the reading of the Decameron, for the sake of modesty, and for the sake of the author, who would not have an apologist always at hand to state in his excuse that he wrote it when young, and at the command of his superiors [1]. It is neither the licentiousness of the writer, nor the evil propensities of the reader, which have given to the Decameron alone, of all the works of Boccaccio, a perpetual popularity. The establishment of a new and delightful dialect conferred an immortality on the works in which it was first fixed. The sonnets of Petrarch were, for the same reason, fated to survive his self-admired Africa, the "*favourite of kings.*" The invariable traits of nature and feeling with which the novels, as well as the verses, abound, have doubtless been the chief source of the foreign celebrity of both authors; but Boccaccio, as a man, is no more to be estimated by that work, than Petrarch is to be regarded in no other light than as the lover of Laura. Even, however, had the father of the Tuscan prose been known only as the author of the Decameron, a considerate writer would have been cautious to pronounce a sentence irreconcilable with the unerring voice of many ages and nations. An irrevocable value has never been stamped upon any work solely recommended by impurity.

The true source of the outcry against Boccaccio, which began at a very early period, was the choice of his scandalous

[1] " Non enim ubique est, qui in excusationem meam consurgens dicat, juvenis scripsit, et majoris coactus imperio." The letter was addressed to Maghinard of Cavalcanti, marshal of the kingdom of Sicily. See Tiraboschi, Storia, &c. tom. v. par. ii. lib. iii. pag. 525. ed. Ven. 1795.

personages in the cloisters as well as the courts; but the princes only laughed at the gallant adventures so unjustly charged upon Queen Theodelinda, whilst the priesthood cried shame upon the debauches drawn from the convent and the hermitage; and most probably for the opposite reason, namely, that the picture was faithful to the life. Two of the novels are allowed to be facts usefully turned into tales, to deride the canonization of rogues and laymen. Ser Ciappelletto and Marcellinus are cited with applause even by the decent Muratori[1]. The great Arnaud, as he is quoted in Bayle, states, that a new edition of the novels was proposed, of which the expurgation consisted in omitting the words "monk" and "nun," and tacking the immoralities to other names. The literary history of Italy particularises no such edition; but it was not long before the whole of Europe had but one opinion of the Decameron; and the absolution of the author seems to have been a point settled at least a hundred years ago: "On se feroit siffler si l'on pretendoit convaincre Boccace de n'avoir pas été honnête homme, puis qu'il a fait le Decameron." So said one of the best men, and perhaps the best critic, that ever lived—the very martyr to impartiality[2]. But as this information, that in the beginning of the last century one would have been hooted at for pretending that Boccaccio was not a good man, may seem to come from one of those enemies who are to be suspected, even when they make us a present of truth, a more acceptable contrast with the proscription of the body, soul, and muse of Boccaccio may be found in a few words from the virtuous, the patriotic cotemporary, who thought one of the tales of this impure writer worthy a Latin version from his own pen. "*I have remarked elsewhere*," says Petrarch, writing to Boccaccio, "*that the book itself has been worried by certain dogs, but stoutly defended by your staff and voice. Nor was I astonished, for I have had proof of the vigour of your mind, and I know you have fallen on that unaccommodating incapable race of mortals*

[1] Dissertazioni sopra le antichità Italiane. Diss. lviii. p. 253. tom. iii. edit. Milan, 1751.

[2] *Eclaircissement*, &c. &c. p. 638. edit. Basle, 1741, in the Supplement to Bayle's Dictionary.

who, whatever they either like not, or know not, or cannot do, are sure to reprehend in others; and on those occasions only put on a show of learning and eloquence, but otherwise are entirely dumb[1]."

It is satisfactory to find that all the priesthood do not resemble those of Certaldo, and that one of them who did not possess the bones of Boccaccio would not lose the opportunity of raising a cenotaph to his memory. Bevius, canon of Padua, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, erected at Arquà, opposite to the tomb of the Laureate, a tablet, in which he associated Boccaccio to the equal honours of Dante and of Petrarch.

34.

What is her pyramid of precious stones?

Stanza lx. line 1.

Our veneration for the Medici begins with Cosmo and expires with his grandson; that stream is pure only at the source; and it is in search of some memorial of the virtuous republicans of the family that we visit the church of St. Lorenzo at Florence. The tawdry, glaring, unfinished chapel in that church, designed for the mausoleum of the Dukes of Tuscany, set round with crowns and coffins, gives birth to no emotions but those of contempt for the lavish vanity of a race of despots, whilst the pavement slab simply inscribed to the Father of his Country, reconciles us to the name of Medici[2]. It was very natural for Corinna[3] to suppose that the statue raised to the Duke of Urbino in the *capella de' depositi* was intended for his great namesake; but the magnificent Lorenzo is only the sharer of a coffin half hidden in a niche of the sacristy. The decay of Tuscany dates from the sovereignty of the Medici. Of the sepulchral peace which succeeded to the establishment of the

[1] "Animadverti alicubi librum ipsum canum dentibus lacessitum, tuo tamen baculo egregiè tuâque voce defensam. Nec miratus sum: nam et vires ingenii tui novi, et scio expertus esses hominum genus insolens et ignavum, qui quicquid ipsi vel nolunt vel nesciunt, vel non possunt, in aliis reprehendunt; ad hoc unum docti et arguti, sed elingues ad reliqua." . . . Epist. Joan. Boccatio. Opp. tom. i. p. 540. edit. Basil.

[2] Cosmus Medices, Decreto Publico. Pater Patriæ.

[3] Corinne, Liv. xviii. cap. iii. vol. iii. page 248.

reigning families in Italy, our own Sidney has given us a glowing, but a faithful picture. "Notwithstanding all the seditions of Florence, and other cities of Tuscany, the horrid factions of Guelphs and Ghibelins, Neri and Bianchi, nobles and commons, they continued populous, strong, and exceeding rich; but in the space of less than a hundred and fifty years, the peaceable reign of the Medices is thought to have destroyed nine parts in ten of the people of that province. Amongst other things it is remarkable, that when Philip the Second of Spain gave Sienna to the Duke of Florence, his embassador then at Rome sent him word that he had given away more than 650,000 subjects; and it is not believed there are now 20,000 souls inhabiting that city and territory. Pisa, Pistoia, Arezzo, Cortona, and other towns, that were then good and populous, are in the like proportion diminished, and Florence more than any. When that city had been long troubled with seditions, tumults, and wars, for the most part unprosperous, they still retained such strength, that when Charles VIII. of France, being admitted as a friend with his whole army, which soon after conquered the kingdom of Naples, thought to master them, the people, taking arms, struck such a terror into him, that he was glad to depart upon such conditions as they thought fit to impose. Machiavel reports, that in that time Florence alone, with the Val d'Arno, a small territory belonging to that city, could, in a few hours, by the sound of a bell, bring together 135,000 well-armed men; whereas now that city, with all the others in that province, are brought to such despicable weakness, emptiness, poverty and baseness, that they can neither resist the oppressions of their own prince, nor defend him or themselves if they were assaulted by a foreign enemy. The people are dispersed or destroyed, and the best families sent to seek habitations in Venice, Genoa, Rome, Naples, and Lucca. This is not the effect of war or pestilence; they enjoy a perfect peace, and suffer no other plague than the government they are under[1]." From the usurper Cosmo down to the imbecil

[1] On Government, chap. ii. sect. xxvi. pag. 208. edit. 1751. Sidney is, together with Locke and Hoadley, one of Mr. Hume's "*despicable*" writers.

Gaston, we look in vain for any of those unmixed qualities which should raise a patriot to the command of his fellow citizens. The Grand Dukes, and particularly the third Cosmo, had operated so entire a change in the Tuscan character, that the candid Florentines, in excuse for some imperfections in the philanthropic system of Leopold, are obliged to confess that the sovereign was the only liberal man in his dominions. Yet that excellent prince himself had no other notion of a national assembly, than of a body to represent the wants and wishes, not the will of the people.

35.

An earthquake reel'd unheededly away.

Stanza lxiii. line 5.

"*And such was their mutual animosity, so intent were they upon the battle, that the earthquake, which overthrew in great part many of the cities of Italy, which turned the course of rapid streams, pourcd back the sea upon the rivers, and tore down the very mountains, was not felt by one of the combatants*[1]." Such is the description of Livy. It may be doubted whether modern tactics would admit of such an abstraction.

The site of the battle of Thrasimene is not to be mistaken. The traveller from the village under Cortona to Casa di Piano, the next stage on the way to Rome, has for the first two or three miles, around him, but more particularly to the right, that flat land which Hannibal laid waste in order to induce the Consul Flaminius to move from Arezzo. On his left, and in front of him, is a ridge of hills, bending down towards the lake of Thrasimene, called by Livy "montes Cortonenses," and now named the Gualandra. These hills he approaches at Ossaja, a village which the itineraries pretend to have been so denominated from the bones found there: but there have been no bones found there, and the battle was fought on the other

[1] "Tantusque fuit ardor animorum, adeo intentus pugnæ animus, ut eum terræ motum qui multarum urbium Italiæ magnas partes prostravit, avertitque cursu rapido amnes, mare fluminibus invexit, montes lapsu ingenti proruit, nemo pugnantium senserit." . . . Tit. Liv. lib. xxii. cap. xii.

side of the hill. From Ossaja the road begins to rise a little, but does not pass into the roots of the mountains until the sixty-seventh milestone from Florence. The ascent thence is not steep but perpetual, and continues for twenty minutes. The lake is soon seen below on the right, with Borghetto, a round tower close upon the water; and the undulating hills partially covered with wood, amongst which the road winds, sink by degrees into the marshes near to this tower. Lower than the road, down to the right amidst these woody hillocks, Hannibal placed his horse[1], in the jaws of or rather above the pass, which was between the lake and the present road, and most probably close to Borghetto, just under the lowest of the "tumuli[2]." On a summit to the left, above the road, is an old circular ruin which the peasants call "the Tower of Hannibal the Carthaginian." Arrived at the highest point of the road, the traveller has a partial view of the fatal plain, which opens fully upon him as he descends the Gualandra. He soon finds himself in a vale inclosed to the left and in front and behind him by the Gualandra hills, bending round in a segment larger than a semicircle, and running down at each end to the lake, which obliques to the right and forms the chord of this mountain arc. The position cannot be guessed at from the plains of Cortona, nor appears to be so completely inclosed unless to one who is fairly within the hills. It then, indeed, appears "a place made as it were on purpose for a snare," *locus insidiis natus*. "Borghetto is then found to stand in a narrow marshy pass close to the hill and to the lake, whilst there is no other outlet at the opposite turn of the mountains than through the little town of Passignano, which is pushed into the water by the foot of a high rocky acclivity[3]." There is a woody eminence branching down from the mountains into the upper end of the plain nearer to the side of Passignano, and on this stands a white village called Torre. Polybius seems to allude to this eminence as the one on which Hannibal encamped and drew out his heavy-armed Africans and

[1] "Equites ad ipsas fauces saltus tumulis apte tegentibus locat." T. Livii, lib. xxii. cap. iv.

[2] "Ubi maxime montes Cortonenses Thrasimenus subit." Ibid.

[3] "Inde colles assurgunt." Ibid.

Spaniards in a conspicuous position[1]. From this spot he despatched his Balearic and light-armed troops round through the Gualandra heights to the right, so as to arrive unseen and form an ambush amongst the broken acclivities which the road now passes, and to be ready to act upon the left flank and above the enemy, whilst the horse shut up the pass behind. Flaminius came to the lake near Borghetto at sunset; and, without sending any spies before him, marched through the pass the next morning before the day had quite broken, so that he perceived nothing of the horse and light troops above and about him, and saw only the heavy-armed Carthaginians in front on the hill of Torre[2]. The consul began to draw out his army in the flat, and in the mean time the horse in ambush occupied the pass behind him at Borghetto. Thus the Romans were completely inclosed, having the lake on the right, the main army on the hill of Torre in front, the Gualandra hills filled with the light-armed on their left flank, and being prevented from receding by the cavalry, who, the farther they advanced, stopped up all the outlets in the rear. A fog rising from the lake now spread itself over the army of the consul, but the high lands were in the sunshine, and all the different corps in ambush looked towards the hill of Torre for the order of attack. Hannibal gave the signal, and moved down from his post on the height. At the same moment all his troops on the eminences behind and in the flank of Flaminius, rushed forward as it were with one accord into the plain. The Romans, who were forming their array in the mist, suddenly heard the shouts of the enemy amongst them, on every side, and before they could fall into their ranks, or draw their swords, or see by whom they were attacked, felt at once that they were surrounded and lost.

There are two little rivulets which run from the Gualandra into the lake. The traveller crosses the first of these at about a mile after he comes into the plain, and this divides the Tuscan

[1] Τὸν μὲν κατὰ πρόσωπον τῆς πορείας λόφον αὐτὸς κατελάβετο καὶ τοὺς Λίβυας καὶ τοὺς Ιβηρας ἔχων ἐπ' αὐτοῦ κατεστρατοπέδευσε. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 83. The account in Polybius is not so easily reconcileable with present appearances as that in Livy: he talks of hills to the right and left of the pass and valley; but when Flaminius entered he had the lake at the right of both.

[2] "A tergo et super caput decepere insidiæ." T. Liv. &c.

from the Papal territories. The second, about a quarter of a mile further on, is called "the bloody rivulet," and the peasants point out an open spot to the left between the "Sanguinetto" and the hills, which, they say, was the principal scene of slaughter. The other part of the plain is covered with thick set olive-trees in corn-grounds, and is nowhere quite level except near the edge of the lake. It is, indeed, most probable, that the battle was fought near this end of the valley, for the six thousand Romans, who, at the beginning of the action, broke through the enemy, escaped to the summit of an eminence which must have been in this quarter, otherwise they would have had to traverse the whole plain and to pierce through the main army of Hannibal.

The Romans fought desperately for three hours, but the death of Flaminius was the signal for a general dispersion. The Carthaginian horse then burst in upon the fugitives, and the lake, the marsh about Borghetto, but chiefly the plain of the Sanguinetto and the passes of the Gualandra, were strewed with dead. Near some old walls on a bleak ridge to the left above the rivulet many human bones have been repeatedly found, and this has confirmed the pretensions and the name of the "stream of blood."

Every district of Italy has its hero. In the north some painter is the usual genius of the place, and the foreign Julio Romano more than divides Mantua with her native Virgil[1]. To the south we hear of Roman names. Near Thrasimene tradition is still faithful to the fame of an enemy, and Hannibal the Carthaginian is the only ancient name remembered on the banks of the Perugian lake. Flaminius is unknown; but the postilions on that road have been taught to show the very spot where *Il Console Romano* was slain. Of all who fought and fell in the battle of Thrasimene, the historian himself has, besides the generals and Maharbal, preserved indeed only a single name. You overtake the Carthaginian again on the

1 About the middle of the XIIth century the coins of Mantua bore on one side the image and figure of Virgil. Zecca d'Italia, pl. xvii. i. 6. . . . Voyage dans le Milanais, &c. par A. Z. Millin. tom. ii. pag. 294. Paris, 1817.

same road to Rome. The antiquary, that is, the hostler, of the posthouse at Spoleto, tells you that his town repulsed the victorious enemy, and shows you the gate still called *Porta di Annibale*. It is hardly worth while to remark that a French travel writer, well known by the name of the President Dupaty, saw Thrasimene in the lake of Bolsena, which lay conveniently on his way from Sienna to Rome.

36.

But thou, Clitumnus.

Stanza lxvi. line 1.

No book of travels has omitted to expatiate on the temple of the Clitumnus, between Foligno and Spoleto; and no site, or scenery, even in Italy, is more worthy a description. For an account of the dilapidation of this temple, the reader is referred to Historical Illustrations of the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold.

37.

Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract.

Stanza lxxi. line 9.

I saw the "Cascata del marmore" of Terni twice, at different periods; once from the summit of the precipice, and again from the valley below. The lower view is far to be preferred, if the traveller has time for one only; but in any point of view, either from above or below, it is worth all the cascades and torrents of Switzerland put together: the Staubach, Reichenbach, Pisse Vache, fall of Arpenaz, &c. are rills in comparative appearance. Of the fall of Schaffhausen I cannot speak, not yet having seen it.

38.

An Iris sits amidst the infernal surge.

Stanza lxxii. line 3.

Of the time, place, and qualities of this kind of Iris the reader may have seen a short account in a note to *Manfred*. The fall looks so much like "the hell of waters" that Addison thought the descent alluded to by the gulf in which Alecto plunged into the infernal regions. It is singular enough that

two of the finest cascades in Europe should be artificial—this of the Velino, and the one at Tivoli. The traveller is strongly recommended to trace the Velino, at least as high as the little lake, called *Pie' di Lup*. The Reatine territory was the Italian Tempe[1], and the ancient naturalist, amongst other beautiful varieties, remarked the daily rainbows of the lake Velinus[2]. A scholar of great name has devoted a treatise to this district alone[3].

39.

The thundering lauwine.

Stanza lxxiii. line 5.

In the greater part of Switzerland the avalanches are known by the name of lauwine.

40.

I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word.

Stanza lxxv. lines 6, 7, and 8.

These stanzas may probably remind the reader of *Ensign Northerton's* remarks: "D—n Homo," &c. but the reasons for our dislike are not exactly the same. I wish to express that we become tired of the task before we can comprehend the beauty; that we learn by rote before we can get by heart; that the freshness is worn away, and the future pleasure and advantage deadened and destroyed, by the didactic anticipation, at an age when we can neither feel nor understand the power of compositions which it requires an acquaintance with life, as well as Latin and Greek, to relish, or to reason upon. For the same reason we never can be aware of the fulness of some of the finest passages of Shakespeare ("To be or not to be," for instance), from the habit of having them hammered into us at eight years old, as an exercise, not of mind but of memory:

[1] "Reatini me ad sua Tempe duxerunt." Cicer. epist. ad Attic. xv. lib. iv.

[2] "In eodem lacu nullo non die apparere arcus." Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii. cap. lxii.

[3] Ald. Manut. de Reatina urbe agroque, ap. Sallengre Thesaur. tom. i. p. 773.

so that when we are old enough to enjoy them, the taste is gone, and the appetite palled. In some parts of the Continent, young persons are taught from more common authors, and do not read the best classics till their maturity. I certainly do not speak on this point from any pique or aversion towards the place of my education. I was not a slow, though an idle boy; and I believe no one could, or can be more attached to Harrow than I have always been, and with reason; —a part of the time passed there was the happiest of my life; and my preceptor (the Rev. Dr. Joseph Drury) was the best and worthiest friend I ever possessed, whose warnings I have remembered but too well, though too late—when I have erred, and whose counsels I have but followed when I have done well or wisely. If ever this imperfect record of my feelings towards him should reach his eyes, let it remind him of one who never thinks of him but with gratitude and veneration— of one who would more gladly boast of having been his pupil, if, by more closely following his injunctions, he could reflect any honour upon his instructor.

41.

The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now.

Stanza lxxix. line 5.

For a comment on this and the two following stanzas, the reader may consult Historical Illustrations of the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold.

42.

The trebly hundred triumphs.

Stanza lxxxii. line 2.

Orosius gives three hundred and twenty for the number of triumphs. He is followed by Panvinius; and Panvinius by Mr. Gibbon and the modern writers.

43.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel, &c.

Stanza lxxxiii. line 1.

Certainly were it not for these two traits in the life of Sylla, alluded to in this stanza, we should regard him as a monster

unredeemed by any admirable quality. The *atonement* of his voluntary resignation of empire may perhaps be accepted by us, as it seems to have satisfied the Romans, who if they had not respected must have destroyed him. There could be no mean, no division of opinion; they must have all thought, like Eucrates, that what had appeared ambition was a love of glory, and that what had been mistaken for pride was a real grandeur of soul[1].

44.

And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
Stanza lxxxvi. line 4.

On the third of September Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar; a year afterwards he obtained "his crowning mercy" of Worcester; and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died.

45.

And thou, dread statue! still existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty.
Stanza lxxxvii. lines 1 and 2.

The projected division of the Spada Pompey has already been recorded by the historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Mr. Gibbon found it in the memorials of Flaminius Vacca[2], and it may be added to his mention of it that Pope Julius III. gave the contending owners five hundred crowns for the statue; and presented it to Cardinal Capo di Ferro, who had prevented the judgment of Solomon from being executed upon the image. In a more civilized age this statue was exposed to an actual operation: for the French who acted the Brutus of Voltaire in the Coliseum, resolved that their Cæsar should fall at the base of that Pompey, which was supposed to have been sprinkled with the blood of the original dictator. The nine foot hero was therefore removed to the

[1] "Seigneur, vous changez toutes mes idées de la façon dont je vous vois agir. Je croyois que vous aviez de l'ambition, mais aucun amour pour la gloire: je voyois bien que votre ame étoit haute; mais je ne soupçonnois pas qu'elle fût grande."—Dialogue de Sylla et d'Eucrate.

[2] Memorie, num. lvii. pag. 9. ap. Montfaucon Diarium Italicum.

arena of the amphitheatre, and to facilitate its transport suffered the temporary amputation of its right arm. The republican tragedians had to plead that the arm was a restoration: but their accusers do not believe that the integrity of the statue would have protected it. The love of finding every coincidence has discovered the true Cæsarean ichor in a stain near the right knee; but colder criticism has rejected not only the blood but the portrait, and assigned the globe of power rather to the first of the emperors than to the last of the republican masters of Rome. Winkelmann[1] is loth to allow an heroic statue of a Roman citizen, but the Grimani Agrippa, a cotemporary almost, is heroic; and naked Roman figures were only very rare, not absolutely forbidden. The face accords much better with the "*hominem integrum et castum et gravem*[2]," than with any of the busts of Augustus, and is too stern for him who was beautiful, says Suetonius, at all periods of his life. The pretended likeness to Alexander the Great cannot be discerned, but the traits resemble the medal of Pompey[3]. The objectionable globe may not have been an ill applied flattery to him who found Asia Minor the boundary, and left it the centre of the Roman empire. It seems that Winkelmann has made a mistake in thinking that no proof of the identity of this statute, with that which received the bloody sacrifice, can be derived from the spot where it was discovered[4]. Flaminius Vacca says *sotto una cantina*, and this cantina is known to have been in the Vicolo de' Leutari near the Cancellaria, a position corresponding exactly to that of the Janus before the basilica of Pompey's theatre, to which Augustus transferred the statue after the *curia* was either burnt, or taken down[5]. Part of the Pompeian shade[6], the portico,

[1] Storia delle Arti, &c. lib. ix. cap. 1. pag. 321, 322. tom. ii.

[2] Cicer. Epist. ad Atticum, xi. 6.

[3] Published by Causeus in his Museum Romanum.

[4] Storia delle Arti, &c. Ibid.

[5] Sueton. in vit. August. cap. 31, and in vit. C. J. Cæsar, cap. 88. Appian says it was burnt down. See a note of Pitiscus to Suetonius, pag. 224.

[6] "Tu modo Pompeia lenta spatiare sub umbra."
Ovid. Ar. Aman.

existed in the beginning of the XVth century, and the *atrium* was still called *Satrum*. So says Blondus[1]. At all events, so imposing is the stern majesty of the statue, and so memorable is the story, that the play of the imagination leaves no room for the exercise of the judgment, and the fiction, if a fiction it is, operates on the spectator with an effect not less powerful than truth.

46.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!
Stanza lxxxviii. line 1.

Ancient Rome, like modern Sienna, abounded most probably with images of the foster-mother of her founder: but there were two she-wolves of whom history makes particular mention. One of these, *of brass in ancient work*, was seen by Dionysius[2] at the temple of Romulus, under the Palatine, and is universally believed to be that mentioned by the Latin historian, as having been made from the money collected by a fine on usurers, and as standing under the Ruminal fig-tree[3]. The other was that which Cicero[4] has celebrated both in prose and verse, and which the historian Dion also records as having suffered the same accident as is alluded to by the orator[5]. The

[1] Roma instaurata, lib. ii. fo. 31.

[2] Χάλκεια ποιήματα παλαιᾶς ἐργασίας. Antiq. Rom. lib. I.

[3] "Ad ficum Ruminalem simulacra infantium conditorum urbis sub uberibus lupæ posuerunt." Liv. Hist. lib. x. cap. lxix. This was in the year U. C. 455, or 457.

[4] "Tum statua Nattæ, tum simulacra Deorum, Romulusque et Remus cum altrice bellua vi fulminis ictis conciderunt." De Divinat. ii. 20. "Tactus est ille etiam qui hanc urbem condidit Romulus, quem inauratum in Capitolio parvum atque lactantem, uberibus lupinis inhiantem fuisse meministis." In Catilin. iii. 8.

"Hic silvestris erat Romani nominis altrix
Martia, quæ parvos Mavortis semine natos
Uberibus gravidis vitali rore rigebat
Quæ tum cum pueris flammato fulminis ictu
Concidit, atque avulsa pedum vestigia liquat."
De Consulatu. lib. ii. (lib. i. de Divinat. cap. ii.)

[5] Ἐν γὰρ τῷ καπιτολίῳ ἀνδριάντες τε πολλοὶ ὑπὸ κεραυνῶν συνεχωνεύθησαν, καὶ ἀγάλματα ἄλλα τε, καὶ διὸς ἐπὶ κίονος ἱδρυμένου, εἰκών

question agitated by the antiquaries is, whether the wolf now in the conservators' palace is that of Livy and Dionysius, or that of Cicero, or whether it is neither one nor the other. The earlier writers differ as much as the moderns: Lucius Faunus[1] says, that it is the one alluded to by both, which is impossible, and also by Virgil, which may be. Fulvius Ursinus[2] calls it the wolf of Dionysius, and Marlianus[3] talks of it as the one mentioned by Cicero. To him Rycquius *tremblingly* assents[4]. Nardini is inclined to suppose it may be one of the many wolves preserved in ancient Rome; but of the two rather bends to the Ciceronian statue[5]. Montfaucon[6] men-

τέ τις λυκαίνης σὺν τε τῷ Ῥώμῳ καὶ σὺν τῷ Ῥωμύλῳ ἱδρυμένη ἔπεσεν. Dion. Hist. lib. xxxvii. pag. 37. edit. Rob. Steph. 1548. He goes on to mention that the letters of the columns on which the laws were written were liquefied and become ἀμυδρὰ. All that the Romans did was to erect a large statue to Jupiter, looking towards the east: no mention is afterwards made of the wolf. This happened in A. U. C. 689. The Abate Fea, in noticing this passage of Dion (Storia delle Arti, &c. tom. i. pag. 202. note x.), says, *Non ostante, aggiunge Dione, che fosse ben fermata* (the wolf), by which it is clear the Abate translated the Xylandro-Leunclavian version, which puts *quamvis stabilita* for the original ἱδρυμένη, a word that does not mean *ben-fermata*, but only *raised*, as may be distinctly seen from another passage of the same Dion: Ἠβουλήθη μὲν οὖν ὁ Ἀγρίππας καὶ τὸν Αὔγουστον ἐνταῦθα ἱδρύσαι. Hist. lib. lvi. Dion says that Agrippa "wished *to raise a statue* of Augustus in the Pantheon."

1 "In eadem porticu ænea lupa, cujus uberibus Romulus ac Remus lactantes inhiant, conspicitur: de hac Cicero et Virgilius semper intellexere. Livius hoc signum ab Ædilibus ex pecuniis quibus multati essent fœneratores, positum innuit. Antea in Comitiis ad Ficum Ruminalem, quo loco pueri fuerant expositi locatum pro certo est." Luc. Fauni. de Antiq. Urb. Rom. lib. ii. cap. vii. ap. Sallengre, tom. i. p. 217. In his XVIIth chapter he repeats that the statues were there, but not that they were *found* there.

2 Ap. Nardini Roma Vetus, lib. v. cap. iv.

3 Marliani Urb. Rom. topograph. lib. ii. cap. ix. He mentions another wolf and twins in the Vatican. lib. v. cap. xxi.

4 "Non desunt qui hanc ipsam esse putent, quam adpinximus, quæ è comitio in Basilicam Lateranam, cum nonnullis aliis antiquitatum reliquiis, atque hinc in Capitolium postea relata sit, quamvis Marlianus antiquam Capitolinam esse maluit a Tullio descriptam, cui ut in re nimis dubia, trepidè adsentimur." Just. Rycquii de Capit. Roman. Comm. cap. xxiv. pag. 250. edit. Lugd. Bat. 1696.

5 Nardini Roma Vetus, lib. v. cap. iv.

6 "Lupa hodieque in capitolinis prostat ædibus, cum vestigio fulminis quo ictam narrat Cicero." Diarium Italic. tom. i. p. 174.

tions it as a point without doubt. Of the latter writers the decisive Winkelmann[1] proclaims it as having been found at the church of Saint Theodore, where, or near where, was the temple of Romulus, and consequently makes it the wolf of Dionysius. His authority is Lucius Faunus, who, however, only says that it *was placed*, not *found*, at the Ficus Ruminalis by the Comitium, by which he does not seem to allude to the church of Saint Theodore. Rycquius was the first to make the mistake, and Winkelmann followed Rycquius.

Flaminius Vacca tells quite a different story, and says he had heard the wolf with the twins was found[2] near the arch of Septimius Severus. The commentator on Winkelmann is of the same opinion with that learned person, and is incensed at Nardini for not having remarked that Cicero, in speaking of the wolf struck with lightning in the Capitol, makes use of the past tense. But, with the Abate's leave, Nardini does not positively assert the statue to be that mentioned by Cicero, and, if he had, the assumption would not perhaps have been so exceedingly indiscreet. The Abate himself is obliged to own that there are marks very like the scathing of lightning in the hinder legs of the present wolf; and, to get rid of this, adds, that the wolf seen by Dionysius might have been also struck by lightning, or otherwise injured.

Let us examine the subject by a reference to the words of Cicero. The orator in two places seems to particularize the Romulus and the Remus, especially the first, which his audience remembered to *have been* in the Capitol, as being struck with lightning. In his verses he records that the twins and wolf both fell, and that the latter left behind the marks of her feet. Cicero does not say that the wolf was consumed: and

[1] Storia delle Arti, &c. lib. iii. cap. iii. § ii. note 10. Winkelmann has made a strange blunder in the note, by saying the Ciceronian wolf was *not* in the Capitol, and that Dion was wrong in saying so.

[2] "Intesi dire, che l'Ercolo di bronzo, che oggi si trova nella sala di Campidoglio, fu trovato nel foro Romano appresso l'arco di Settimio; e vi fu trovata anche la lupa di bronzo che allata Romolo e Remo, e stà nella Loggia de conservatori." Flam. Vacca, Memorie, num. iii. pag. 1. ap. Montfaucon, Diar. Ital. tom. i.

Dion only mentions that it fell down, without alluding, as the Abate has made him, to the force of the blow, or the firmness with which it had been fixed. The whole strength, therefore, of the Abate's argument, hangs upon the past tense; which, however, may be somewhat diminished by remarking that the phrase only shows that the statue was not then standing in its former position. Winkelmann has observed, that the present twins are modern; and it is equally clear that there are marks of gilding on the wolf, which might therefore be supposed to make part of the ancient group. It is known that the sacred images of the Capitol were not destroyed when injured by time or accident, but were put into certain under-ground depositaries called *favissæ*[1]. It may be thought possible that the wolf had been so deposited, and had been replaced in some conspicuous situation when the Capitol was rebuilt by Vespasian. Rycquius, without mentioning his authority, tells that it was transferred from the Comitium to the Lateran, and thence brought to the Capitol. If it was found near the arch of Severus, it may have been one of the images which Orosius[2] says was thrown down in the Forum by lightning when Alaric took the city. That it is of very high antiquity the workmanship is a decisive proof; and that circumstance induced Winkelmann to believe it the wolf of Dionysius. The Capitoline wolf, however, may have been of the same early date as that at the temple of Romulus. Lactantius[3] asserts that in his time the Romans worshipped a wolf; and it is known that the Lupercalia held out to a very late period[4] after every other

[1] Luc. Faun. ibid.

[2] See note to stanza LXXX. in Historical Illustrations.

[3] "Romuli nutrix Lupa honoribus est affecta divinis, et ferrem si animal ipsum fuisset, cujus figuram gerit." Lactant. de Falsa Religione, lib. 1. cap. 20. pag. 101. edit. varior. 1660; that is to say, he would rather adore a wolf than a prostitute. His commentator has observed that the opinion of Livy concerning Laurentia being figured in this wolf was not universal. Strabo thought so. Rycquius is wrong in saying that Lactantius mentions the wolf was in the Capitol.

[4] To A. D. 496. "Quis credere possit," says Baronius [Ann. Eccles. tom. viii. p. 602. in an. 496.] "viguisse adhuc Romæ ad Gelasii tempora, quæ fuere ante exordia urbis allata in Italiam Lupercalia?" Gelasius wrote a

observance of the ancient superstition had totally expired. This may account for the preservation of the ancient image longer than the other early symbols of Paganism.

It may be permitted, however, to remark, that the wolf was a Roman symbol, but that the worship of that symbol is an inference drawn by the zeal of Lactantius. The early Christian writers are not to be trusted in the charges which they make against the Pagans. Eusebius accused the Romans to their faces of worshipping Simon Magus, and raising a statue to him in the island of the Tyber. The Romans had probably never heard of such a person before, who came, however, to play a considerable, though scandalous part in the church history, and has left several tokens of his aerial combat with St. Peter at Rome; notwithstanding that an inscription found in this very island of the Tyber showed the Simon Magus of Eusebius to be a certain indigenal god, called Semo Sangus or Fidius[1].

Even when the worship of the founder of Rome had been abandoned, it was thought expedient to humour the habits of the good matrons of the city by sending them with their sick infants to the church of Saint Theodore, as they had before carried them to the temple of Romulus[2]. The practice is continued to this day; and the site of the above church seems to be thereby identified with that of the temple: so that if the wolf had been really found there, as Winkelmann says, there would be no doubt of the present statue being that seen by Dionysius[3]. But Faunus, in saying that it was at the Ficus

letter which occupies four folio pages to Andromachus, the senator, and others, to show that the rites should be given up.

[1] Eusebius has these words: καὶ ἀνδριάντι παρ' ὑμῖν ὡς θεὸς τετίμηται, ἐν τῷ Τίβερι ποταμῷ μεταξὺ τῶν δύο γεφυρῶν, ἔχων ἐπιγραφὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν τάυτην Σίμωνι δέω Σάγκτω. Eccles. Hist. Lib. ii. cap. xiii. p. 40. Justin Martyr had told the story before; but Baronius himself was obliged to detect this fable. See Nardini Roma Vet. lib. vii. cap. xii.

[2] "In essa gli antichi pontefici per toglier la memoria de' giuochi Lupercali istituiti in onore di Romolo, introdussero l'uso di portarvi Bambini oppressi da infermità occulte, acciò si liberino per l'intercessione di questo Santo, come di continuo si sperimenta." Rione xii. Ripa accurata e succincta descrizione, &c. di Roma Moderna dell' Ab. Ridolf. Venuti, 1766.

[3] Nardini, lib. v. cap. 11. convicts Pomponius Lætus *crassi erroris*, in putting the Ruminal fig-tree at the church of Saint Theodore: but as Livy says the wolf was at the Ficus Ruminalis, and Dionysius at the temple of

Ruminalis by the Comitium, is only talking of its ancient position as recorded by Pliny; and even if he had been remarking where it was found, would not have alluded to the church of Saint Theodore, but to a very different place, near which it was then thought the Ficus Ruminalis had been, and also the Comitium; that is, the three columns by the church of Santa Maria Liberatrice, at the corner of the Palatine looking on the Forum.

It is, in fact, a mere conjecture where the image was actually dug up[1], and perhaps, on the whole, the marks of the gilding, and of the lightning, are a better argument in favour of its being the Ciceronian wolf than any that can be adduced for the contrary opinion. At any rate, it is reasonably selected in the text of the poem as one of the most interesting relics of the ancient city[2], and is certainly the figure, if not the very animal to which Virgil alludes in his beautiful verses:

> "Geminos huic ubera circum
> Ludere pendentes pueros, et lambere matrem
> Impavidos: illam tereti cervice reflexam
> Mulcere alternos, et corpora fingere linguâ[3]."

47.

For the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould.

Stanza xc. lines 3 and 4.

It is possible to be a very great man and to be still very in-

Romulus, he is obliged (cap. iv.) to own that the two were close together, as well as the Lupercal cave, shaded, as it were, by the fig-tree.

[1] "Ad comitium ficus olim Ruminalis germinabat, sub qua lupæ rumam, hoc est, mammam, docente Varrone, suxerant olim Romulus et Remus; non procul a templo hodie D. Mariæ Liberatricis appellato ubi *forsan* inventa nobilis illa ænea statua lupæ geminos puerulos lactantis, quam hodie in capitolis videmus." Olai Borrichii Antiqua Urbis Romana facies, cap. x. See also cap. xii. Borrichius wrote after Nardini in 1687. Ap. Græv. Antiq. Rom. tom. iv. p. 1522.

[2] Donatus, lib. xi. cap. 18. gives a medal representing on one side the wolf in the same position as that in the Capitol; and in the reverse the wolf with the head not reverted. It is of the time of Antoninus Pius.

[3] Æn. viii. 631. See—Dr. Middleton, in his Letter from Rome, who inclines to the Ciceronian wolf, but without examining the subject.

ferior to Julius Cæsar, the most complete character, so Lord Bacon thought, of all antiquity. Nature seems incapable of such extraordinary combinations as composed his versatile capacity, which was the wonder even of the Romans themselves. The first general—the only triumphant politician—inferior to none in eloquence—comparable to any in the attainments of wisdom, in an age made up of the greatest commanders, statesmen, orators, and philosophers that ever appeared in the world—an author who composed a perfect specimen of military annals in his travelling carriage—at one time in a controversy with Cato, at another writing a treatise on punning, and collecting a set of good sayings—fighting [1] and making love at the same moment, and willing to abandon both his empire and his mistress for a sight of the Fountains of the Nile. Such did Julius Cæsar appear to his cotemporaries and to those of the subsequent ages, who were the most inclined to deplore and execrate his fatal genius.

But we must not be so much dazzled with his surpassing glory, or with his magnanimous, his amiable qualities, as to forget the decision of his impartial countrymen:

HE WAS JUSTLY SLAIN [2].

[1] In his tenth book, Lucan shows him sprinkled with the blood of Pharsalia in the arms of Cleopatra,

Sanguine Thessalicæ cladis perfusus adulter
Admisit Venerem curis, et miscuit armis.

After feasting with his mistress, he sits up all night to converse with the Ægyptian sages, and tells Achoreus,

Spes sit mihi certa videndi
Niliacos fontes, bellum civile relinquam.
" Sic velut in tuta securi pace trahebant
Noctis iter medium."

Immediately afterwards, he is fighting again and defending every position.

" Sed adest defensor ubique
Cæsar et hos aditus gladiis, hos ignibus arcet
. . . . . cæca nocte carinis
Insiluit Cæsar semper feliciter usus
Præcipiti cursu bellorum et tempore rapto."

[2] " Jure cæsus existimetur," says Suetonius, after a fair estimation of

48.

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail.

Stanza xciii. lines 1 and 2.

"....omnes pene veteres; qui nihil cognosci, nihil percepi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt; angustos sensus; imbecillos animos, brevia curricula vitæ; in profundo veritatem demersam; opinionibus et institutis omnia teneri; nihil veritati relinqui: deinceps omnia tenebris circumfusa esse dixerunt[1]." The eighteen hundred years which have elapsed since Cicero wrote this have not removed any of the imperfections of humanity: and the complaints of the ancient philosophers may, without injustice or affectation, be transcribed in a poem written yesterday.

49.

There is a stern round tower of other days.

Stanza xcix. line 1.

Alluding to the tomb of Cecilia Metella, called Capo di Bove, in the Appian Way. See—Historical Illustrations of the IVth Canto of Childe Harold.

50.

Prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death.

Stanza cii. lines 5 and 6.

Ὃν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν, ἀποθνήσκει νέος.
Τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν, ἀλλ' αἰσχρῶς θανεῖν.

Rich. Franc. Phil. Brunck. Poetæ Gnomici, p. 231, edit. 1784.

his character, and making use of a phrase which was a formula in Livy's time. "Melium jure cæsum pronuntiavit, etiam si regni crimine insons fuerit:" [lib. iv. cap. 48.] and which was continued in the legal judgments pronounced in justifiable homicides, such as killing housebreakers. See Sueton. in Vit. C. J. Cæsar. with the commentary of Pitiscus, p. 184.

[1] Academ. I. 13.

51.

Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls.
Stanza cvii. line 9.

The Palatine is one mass of ruins, particularly on the side towards the Circus Maximus. The very soil is formed of crumbled brick-work. Nothing has been told, nothing can be told, to satisfy the belief of any but a Roman antiquary. See —Historical Illustrations, page 206.

52.

There is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First Freedom, and then Glory, &c.
Stanza cviii. lines 1, 2, and 3.

The author of the Life of Cicero, speaking of the opinion entertained of Britain by that orator and his cotemporary Romans, has the following eloquent passage: "From their raillеries of this kind, on the barbarity and misery of our island, one cannot help reflecting on the surprising fate and revolutions of kingdoms; how Rome, once the mistress of the world, the seat of arts, empire, and glory, now lies sunk in sloth, ignorance, and poverty, enslaved to the most cruel as well as to the most contemptible of tyrants, superstition and religious imposture: while this remote country, anciently the jest and contempt of the polite Romans, is become the happy seat of liberty, plenty, and letters; flourishing in all the arts and refinements of civil life; yet running perhaps the same course which Rome itself had run before it, from virtuous industry to wealth; from wealth to luxury; from luxury to an impatience of discipline, and corruption of morals: till, by a total degeneracy and loss of virtue, being grown ripe for destruction, it fall a prey at last to some hardy oppressor, and, with the loss of liberty, losing every thing that is valuable, sinks gradually again into its original barbarism [1]."

[1] The History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero, sect. vi. vol. ii. p. 102. The contrast has been reversed in a late extraordinary instance. A gentleman was thrown into prison at Paris; efforts were made for his release.

53.

And apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime.

Stanza cx. lines 8 and 9.

The column of Trajan is surmounted by St. Peter; that of Aurelius by St. Paul. See—Historical Illustrations of the IVth Canto, &c.

54.

Still we Trajan's name adore.

Stanza cxi. line 9.

Trajan was *proverbially* the best of the Roman princes[1]; and it would be easier to find a sovereign uniting exactly the opposite characteristics, than one possessed of all the happy qualities ascribed to this emperor. "When he mounted the throne," says the historian Dion[2], "he was strong in body, he was vigorous in mind; age had impaired none of his faculties; he was altogether free from envy and from detraction; he honoured all the good, and he advanced them; and on this account they could not be the objects of his fear, or of his hate; he never listened to informers; he gave not way to his anger; he abstained equally from unfair exactions and unjust punish-

The French minister continued to detain him, under the pretext that he was not an Englishman, but only *a Roman*. See "Interesting Facts relating to Joachim Murat," pag. 139.

[1] "Hujus tantùm memoriæ delatum est, ut, usque ad nostram ætatem non aliter in Senatu principibus acclamatur, nisi, FELICIOR . AVGVSTO . MELIOR . TRAJANO." Eutrop. Brev. Hist. Rom. lib. viii. cap. v.

[2] Τῷ τε γὰρ σώματι ἐῤῥώστο ..... καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ ἤκμαζεν, ὡς μήθ' ὑπὸ γήρως ἀμβλύνεσθαι .... καὶ οὔτ' ἐφθόνει οὔτε καθήρει τινὰ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάνυ πάντας τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἐτίμα καὶ ἐμεγάλυνε· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὔτε ἐφοβεῖτό τινα αὐτῶν, οὔτε ἐμίσει .. διαβολαίς τε ἥκιστα ἐπιστεύε, καὶ ὀργῇ ἥκιστα ἐδουλοῦτο· τῶν τε χρημάτων τῶν ἀλλωτρίων ἴσα καὶ φόνων τῶν ἀδίκων ἀπείχετο .... φιλούμενός τε οὖν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς μᾶλλον ἢ τιμώμενος ἔχαιρε, καὶ τῷ τε δήμῳ μετ' ἐπιεικείας συνεγίνετο, καὶ τῇ γνησιότητι σεμνοπρεπῶς ὡμίλει· ἀγαπητὸς μὲν πᾶσι· φοβερὸς δὲ μηδενὶ, πλὴν πολεμίοις ὤν. Hist. Rom. lib. lxviii. cap. vi. et vii. tom. ii. p. 1123, 1124, edit. Hamb. 1750.

ments; he had rather be loved as a man than honoured as a sovereign; he was affable with his people, respectful to the senate, and universally beloved by both; he inspired none with dread but the enemies of his country."

55.

Rienzi, last of Romans.

Stanza cxiv. line 5.

The name and exploits of Rienzi must be familiar to the reader of Gibbon. Some details and inedited manuscripts relative to this unhappy hero will be seen in the Illustrations of the IVth Canto.

56.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast.

Stanza cxv. lines 1, 2, and 3.

The respectable authority of Flaminius Vacca would incline us to believe in the claims of the Egerian grotto [1]. He assures us that he saw an inscription in the pavement, stating that the fountain was that of Egeria dedicated to the nymphs. The inscription is not there at this day; but Montfaucon quotes two lines [2] of Ovid from a stone in the Villa Giustiniani, which he seems to think had been brought from the same grotto.

This grotto and valley were formerly frequented in summer, and particularly the first Sunday in May, by the modern Ro-

[1] "Poco lontano dal detto luogo si scende ad un casaletto, del quale ne sono Padroni li Cafarelli, che con questo nome è chiamato il luogo; vi è una fontana sotto una gran volta antica, che al presente si gode, e li Romani vi vanno l'estate a ricrearsi; nel pavimento di essa fonte si legge in un epitaffio essere quella la fonte di Egeria, dedicata alle ninfe, e questa, dice l'epitaffio, essere la medesima fonte in cui fu convertita." Memorie, &c. ap. Nardini, pag. 13. He does not give the inscription.

[2] "In villa Justiniana extat ingens lapis quadratus solidus in quo sculpta hæc duo Ovidii carmina sunt:

Ægeria est quæ præbet aquas dea grata Camœnis
Illa Numæ conjunx consiliumque fuit.

Qui lapis videtur ex eodem Egeriæ fonte, aut ejus vicinia isthuc comportatus." Diarium Italic. p. 153.

mans, who attached a salubrious quality to the fountain which trickles from an orifice at the bottom of the vault, and, overflowing the little pools, creeps down the matted grass into the brook below. The brook is the Ovidian Almo, whose name and qualities are lost in the modern Aquataccio. The valley itself is called Valle di Caffarelli, from the dukes of that name who made over their fountain to the Pallavicini, with sixty *rubbia* of adjoining land.

There can be little doubt that this long dell is the Egerian valley of Juvenal, and the pausing place of Umbritius, notwithstanding the generality of his commentators have supposed the descent of the satirist and his friend to have been into the Arician grove, where the nymph met Hippolitus, and where she was more peculiarly worshipped.

The step from the Porta Capena to the Alban hill, fifteen miles distant, would be too considerable, unless we were to believe in the wild conjecture of Vossius, who makes that gate travel from its present station, where he pretends it was during the reign of the Kings, as far as the Arician grove, and then makes it recede to its old site with the shrinking city[1]. The tufo, or pumice, which the poet prefers to marble, is the substance composing the bank in which the grotto is sunk.

The modern topographers[2] find in the grotto the statue of the nymph and nine niches for the Muses, and a late traveller[3] has discovered that the cave is restored to that simplicity which the poet regretted had been exchanged for injudicious ornament. But the headless statue is palpably rather a male than a nymph, and has none of the attributes ascribed to it at present visible. The nine Muses could hardly have stood in six niches; and Juvenal certainly does not allude to any individual cave[4].

[1] De Magnit. Vet. Rom. ap. Græv. Ant. Rom. tom. iv. p. 1507.

[2] Echinard, Descrizione di Roma e dell' agro Romano, corretto dall' Abate Venuti, in Roma, 1750. They believe in the grotto and nymph. "Simulacro di questo fonte, essendovi sculpite le acque a pie di esso."

[3] Classical Tour, chap. vi. p. 217. vol. ii.

[4] "Substitit ad veteres arcus, madidamque Capenam,
Hic ubi nocturnæ Numa constituebat amicæ.
Nunc sacri fontis nemus, et delubra locantur
Judæis quorum cophinum fœnamque supellex.

Nothing can be collected from the satirist but that somewhere near the Porta Capena was a spot in which it was supposed Numa held nightly consultations with his nymph, and where there was a grove and a sacred fountain, and fanes once consecrated to the Muses; and that from this spot there was a descent into the valley of Egeria, where were several artificial caves. It is clear that the statues of the Muses made no part of the decoration which the satirist thought misplaced in these caves; for he expressly assigns other fanes (delubra) to these divinities above the valley, and moreover tells us that they had been ejected to make room for the Jews. In fact, the little temple, now called that of Bacchus, was formerly thought to belong to the Muses, and Nardini[1] places them in a poplar grove, which was in his time above the valley.

It is probable, from the inscription and position, that the cave now shown may be one of the "artificial caverns," of which, indeed, there is another a little way higher up the valley, under a tuft of alder bushes: but a *single* grotto of Egeria is a mere modern invention, grafted upon the application of the epithet Egerian to these nymphea in general, and which might send us to look for the haunts of Numa upon the banks of the Thames.

Our English Juvenal was not seduced into mistranslation by his acquaintance with Pope: he carefully preserves the correct plural—

> "Thence slowly winding down the vale, we view
> The Egerian *grots;* oh, how unlike the true!"

The valley abounds with springs[2], and over these springs, which the Muses might haunt from their neighbouring groves, Egeria presided: hence she was said to supply them with

> Omnis enim populo mercedem pendere jussa est
> Arbor, et ejectis mendicat silva Camœnis.
> In vallem Egeriæ descendimus, et speluncas
> Dissimiles veris: quanto præstantius esset
> Numen aquæ, viridi si margine clauderet undas
> Herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora tophum."
>
> Sat. III.

[1] Lib. iii. cap. iii.

[2] "Undique e solo aquæ scaturiunt." Nardini, lib. iii. cap. iii.

‡

water; and she was the nymph of the grottos through which the fountains were taught to flow.

The whole of the monuments in the vicinity of the Egerian valley have received names at will, which have been changed at will. Venuti[1] owns he can see no traces of the temples of Jove, Saturn, Juno, Venus, and Diana, which Nardini found, or hoped to find. The mutatorium of Caracalla's circus, the temple of Honour and Virtue, the temple of Bacchus, and, above all, the temple of the god Rediculus, are the antiquaries' despair.

The circus of Caracalla depends on a medal of that emperor cited by Fulvius Ursinus, of which the reverse shows a circus, supposed, however, by some to represent the Circus Maximus. It gives a very good idea of that place of exercise. The soil has been but little raised, if we may judge from the small cellular structure at the end of the Spina, which was probably the chapel of the god Consus. This cell is half beneath the soil, as it must have been in the circus itself, for Dionysius[2] could not be persuaded to believe that this divinity was the Roman Neptune, because his altar was under-ground.

57.

Yet let us ponder boldly.

Stanza cxxvii. line 1.

"At all events," says the author of the Academical Questions, "I trust, whatever may be the fate of my own speculations, that philosophy will regain that estimation which it ought to possess. The free and philosophic spirit of our nation has been the theme of admiration to the world. This was the proud distinction of Englishmen, and the luminous source of all their glory. Shall we then forget the manly and dignified sentiments of our ancestors, to prate in the language of the mother or the nurse about our good old prejudices? This is not the way to defend the cause of truth. It was not thus that our fathers maintained it in the brilliant periods of our history. Prejudice may be trusted to guard the outworks

[1] Echinard, &c. Cic. cit. p. 297, 298.
[2] Antiq. Rom. lib. ii. cap. xxxi.

for a short space of time while reason slumbers in the citadel: but if the latter sink into a lethargy, the former will quickly erect a standard for herself. Philosophy, wisdom, and liberty, support each other: he who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot, is a fool; and he who dares not, is a slave." Preface, p. xiv. xv. vol. i. 1805.

58.

Great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long.
Stanza cxxxii. lines 2 and 3.

We read in Suetonius, that Augustus, from a warning received in a dream[1], counterfeited, once a year, the beggar, sitting before the gate of his palace with his hand hollowed and stretched out for charity. A statue formerly in the Villa Borghese, and which should be now at Paris, represents the Emperor in that posture of supplication. The object of this self degradation was the appeasement of Nemesis, the perpetual attendant on good fortune, of whose power the Roman conquerors were also reminded by certain symbols attached to their cars of triumph. The symbols were the whip and the *crotalo*, which were discovered in the Nemesis of the Vatican. The attitude of beggary made the above statue pass for that of Belisarius: and until the criticism of Winkelmann[2] had rectified the mistake, one fiction was called in to support another. It was the same fear of the sudden termination of prosperity that made Amasis king of Egypt warn his friend Polycrates of Samos, that the gods loved those whose lives were chequered with good and evil fortunes. Nemesis was supposed to lie in wait particularly for the prudent; that is, for those whose

[1] Sueton. in Vit. Augusti, cap. 91. Casaubon, in the note, refers to Plutarch's Lives of Camillus and Æmilius Paulus, and also to his apophthegms, for the character of this deity. The hollowed hand was reckoned the last degree of degradation; and when the dead body of the præfect Rufinus was borne about in triumph by the people, the indignity was increased by putting his hand in that position.

[2] Storia delle Arti, &c. lib. xii. cap. iii. tom. ii. p. 422. Visconti calls the statue, however, a Cybele. It is given in the Museo Pio-Clement. tom. i. par. 40. The Abate Fea (Spiegazione dei Rami. Storia, &c. tom. iii. p. 513.) calls it a Chrisippus.

caution rendered them accessible only to mere accidents: and her first altar was raised on the banks of the Phrygian Æsepus by Adrastus, probably the prince of that name who killed the son of Crœsus by mistake. Hence the goddess was called Adrastea[1].

The Roman Nemesis was *sacred* and *august:* there was a temple to her in the Palatine under the name of Rhamnusia[2]: so great indeed was the propensity of the ancients to trust to the revolution of events, and to believe in the divinity of Fortune, that in the same Palatine there was a temple to the Fortune of the day[3]. This is the last superstition which retains its hold over the human heart; and from concentrating in one object the credulity so natural to man, has always appeared strongest in those unembarrassed by other articles of belief. The antiquaries have supposed this goddess to be synonymous with Fortune and with Fate[4]: but it was in her vindictive quality that she was worshipped under the name of Nemesis.

59.

I see before me the Gladiator lie.

Stanza cxl. line 1.

Whether the wonderful statue which suggested this image be a laquearian gladiator, which in spite of Winkelmann's criticism has been stoutly maintained[5], or whether it be a Greek

[1] Dict. de Bayle, article Adrastea.

[2] It is enumerated by the regionary Victor.

[3] Fortunæ hujusce diei. Cicero mentions her, de Legib. lib. ii.

[4] DEAE NEMESI
SIVE FORTUNAE
PISTORIVS
RVGIANVS
V. C. LEGAT.
LEG. XIII. G.
CORD.

See Questiones Romanæ, &c. ap. Græv. Antiq. Roman. tom. v. p. 942. See also Muratori, Nov. Thesaur. Inscrip. Vet. tom. i. p. 88, 89, where there are three Latin and one Greek inscription to Nemesis, and others to Fate.

[5] By the Abate Bracci, dissertazione supra un clipeo votivo, &c. Preface, pag. 7. who accounts for the cord round the neck, but not for the horn,

herald, as that great antiquary positively asserted[1], or whether it is to be thought a Spartan or barbarian shield-bearer, according to the opinion of his Italian editor[2], it must assuredly seem *a copy* of that masterpiece of Ctesilaus which represented "a wounded man dying who perfectly expressed what there remained of life in him[3]." Montfaucon[4] and Maffei[5] thought it the identical statue; but that statue was of bronze. The gladiator was once in the villa Ludovizi, and was bought by Clement XII. The right arm is an entire restoration of Michael Angelo[6].

60.

He, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday.
Stanza cxli. lines 6 and 7.

Gladiators were of two kinds, compelled and voluntary; and were supplied from several conditions; from slaves sold for that purpose; from culprits; from barbarian captives either taken in war, and, after being led in triumph, set apart for the games, or those seized and condemned as rebels; also from free citizens, some fighting for hire *(auctorati)*, others from a depraved ambition: at last even knights and senators were exhibited, a disgrace of which the first tyrant was naturally the first inventor[7]. In the end, dwarfs, and even women, fought;

which it does not appear the gladiators themselves ever used. Note A, Storia delle Arti, tom. ii. p. 205.

1 Either Polifontes, herald of Laius, killed by Œdipus; or Cepreas, herald of Eurithеus, killed by the Athenians when he endeavoured to drag the Heraclidæ from the altar of mercy, and in whose honour they instituted annual games, continued to the time of Hadrian; or Anthemocritus, the Athenian herald, killed by the Megarenses, who never recovered the impiety. See Storia delle Arti, &c. tom. ii. pag. 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, lib. ix. cap. ii.

2 Storia, &c. tom. ii. p. 207. Not. (A.)

3 "Vulneratum deficientem fecit in quo possit intelligi quantum restat animæ." Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxiv. cap. 8.

4 Antiq. tom. iii. par. 2. tab. 155.

5 Race. stat. tab. 64.

6 Mus. Capitol. tom. iii. p. 154. edit. 1755.

7 Julius Cæsar, who rose by the fall of the aristocracy, brought Furius Leptinus and A. Calenus upon the arena.

an enormity prohibited by Severus. Of these the most to be pitied undoubtedly were the barbarian captives; and to this species a Christian writer[1] justly applies the epithet "*innocent*," to distinguish them from the professional gladiators. Aurelian and Claudius supplied great numbers of these unfortunate victims; the one after his triumph, and the other on the pretext of a rebellion[2]. No war, says Lipsius[3], was ever so destructive to the human race as these sports. In spite of the laws of Constantine and Constans, gladiatorial shows survived the old established religion more than seventy years; but they owed their final extinction to the courage of a Christian. In the year 404, on the kalends of January, they were exhibiting the shows in the Flavian amphitheatre before the usual immense concourse of people. Almachius or Telemachus, an eastern monk, who had travelled to Rome intent on his holy purpose, rushed into the midst of the area, and endeavoured to separate the combatants. The prætor Alypius, a person incredibly attached to these games[4], gave instant orders to the gladiators to slay him; and Telemachus gained the crown of martyrdom, and the title of saint, which surely has never either before or since been awarded for a more noble exploit. Honorius immediately abolished the shows, which were never afterwards revived. The story is told by Theodoret[5] and Cassiodorus[6], and seems worthy of credit notwithstanding its place in the Roman martyrology[7]. Besides the torrents of blood which flowed at the funerals, in the amphitheatres, the circus, the forums, and other public places, gladiators

[1] Tertullian "certe quidem et innocentes gladiatores in ludum veniunt, et voluptatis publicæ hostiæ fiant." Just. Lips. Saturn. Sermon. lib. ii. cap. iii.

[2] Vopiscus, in vit. Aurel. and, in vit. Claud. ibid.

[3] "Credo imò scio nullum bellum tantam cladem vastitiemque generi humano intulisse, quam hos ad voluptatem ludos." Just. Lips. ibid. lib. i. cap. xii.

[4] Augustinus (lib. vi. confess. cap. viii.), "Alypium suum gladiatorii spectaculi inhiatu incredibiliter abreptum," scribit. ib. lib. i. cap. xii.

[5] Hist. Eccles. cap. xxvi. lib. v.

[6] Cassiod. Tripartita, l. x. c. xi. Saturn. ib. ib.

[7] Baronius, ad. ann. et in notis ad Martyrol. Rom. 1. Jan. See—Marangoni delle memorie sacre e profane dell' Anfiteatro Flavio, p. 25. edit. 1746.

were introduced at feasts, and tore each other to pieces amidst the supper tables, to the great delight and applause of the guests. Yet Lipsius permits himself to suppose the loss of courage, and the evident degeneracy of mankind, to be nearly connected with the abolition of these bloody spectacles[1].

61.

Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd.
Stanza cxlii. lines 5 and 6.

When one gladiator wounded another, he shouted, "*he has it*," "hoc habet," or "habet." The wounded combatant dropped his weapon, and advancing to the edge of the arena, supplicated the spectators. If he had fought well, the people saved him; if otherwise, or as they happened to be inclined, they turned down their thumbs, and he was slain. They were occasionally so savage that they were impatient if a combat lasted longer than ordinary without wounds or death. The emperor's presence generally saved the vanquished: and it is recorded as an instance of Caracalla's ferocity, that he sent those who supplicated him for life, in a spectacle at Nicomedia, to ask the people; in other words, handed them over to be slain. A similar ceremony is observed at the Spanish bull-fights. The magistrate presides; and after the horsemen and piccadores have fought the bull, the matadore steps forward and bows to him for permission to kill the animal. If the bull has done his duty by killing two or three horses, or a man, which last is rare, the people interfere with shouts, the ladies wave their handkerchiefs, and the animal is saved. The wounds and death of the horses are accompanied with the loudest acclamations, and many gestures of delight, especially from the

[1] "Quod? non tu Lipsi momentum aliquod habuisse censes ad virtutem? Magnum. Tempora nostra, nosque ipsos videamus. Oppidum ecce unum alterumve captum, direptum est; tumultus circa nos, non in nobis: et tamen concidimus et turbamur. Ubi robur, ubi tot per annos meditata sapientiæ studia? ubi ille animus qui possit dicere, *si fractus illabatur orbis?*" &c. ibid. lib. ii. cap. xxv. The prototype of Mr. Windham's panegyric on bull-baiting.

female portion of the audience, including those of the gentlest blood. Every thing depends on habit. The author of Childe Harold, the writer of this note, and one or two other Englishmen, who have certainly in other days borne the sight of a pitched battle, were, during the summer of 1809, in the governor's box at the great amphitheatre of Santa Maria, opposite to Cadiz. The death of one or two horses completely satisfied their curiosity. A gentleman present, observing them shudder and look pale, noticed that unusual reception of so delightful a sport to some young ladies, who stared and smiled, and continued their applauses as another horse fell bleeding to the ground. One bull killed three horses *off his own horns.* He was saved by acclamations, which were redoubled when it was known he belonged to a priest.

An Englishman who can be much pleased with seeing two men beat themselves to pieces, cannot bear to look at a horse galloping round an arena with his bowels trailing on the ground, and turns from the spectacle and the spectators with horror and disgust.

62.

Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head.

Stanza cxliv. line 6.

Suetonius informs us that Julius Cæsar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate, which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was the conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald. A stranger at Rome would hardly have guessed at the motive, nor should we without the help of the historian.

63.

While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand.

Stanza cxlv. line 1.

This is quoted in the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; and a notice on the Coliseum may be seen in the Historical Illustrations to the IVth Canto of Childe Harold.

64.

. . . . . *spared and blest by time.*

Stanza cxlvi. line 3.

" Though plundered of all its brass, except the ring which was necessary to preserve the aperture above; though exposed to repeated fires, though sometimes flooded by the river, and always open to the rain, no monument of equal antiquity is so well preserved as this rotundo. It passed with little alteration from the Pagan into the present worship; and so convenient were its niches for the Christian altar, that Michael Angelo, ever studious of ancient beauty, introduced their design as a model in the Catholic church."

Forsyth's Remarks, &c. on Italy, p. 137. sec. edit.

65.

And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.

Stanza cxlvii. lines 8 and 9.

The Pantheon has been made a receptacle for the busts of modern great, or, at least, distinguished, men. The flood of light which once fell through the large orb above on the whole circle of divinities, now shines on a numerous assemblage of mortals, some one or two of whom have been almost deified by the veneration of their countrymen.

66.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light.

Stanza cxlviii. line 1.

This and the three next stanzas allude to the story of the Roman daughter, which is recalled to the traveller by the site, or pretended site, of that adventure, now shown at the church of St. Nicholas *in carcere*. The difficulties attending the full belief of the tale are stated in Historical Illustrations, &c.

67.

Turn to the Mole, which Hadrian rear'd on high.
Stanza clii. line 1.

The castle of St. Angelo. See—Historical Illustrations.

68.

Stanza cliii.

This and the six next stanzas have a reference to the church of St. Peter's. For a measurement of the comparative length of this basilica, and the other great churches of Europe, see the pavement of St. Peter's, and the Classical Tour through Italy, vol. ii. pag. 125. et seq. chap. iv.

69.

the strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns.
Stanza clxxi. lines 6 and 7.

Mary died on the scaffold; Elizabeth of a broken heart; Charles V. a hermit; Louis XIV. a bankrupt in means and glory; Cromwell of anxiety; and, "the greatest is behind," Napoleon lives a prisoner. To these sovereigns a long but superfluous list might be added of names equally illustrious and unhappy.

70.

Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills.
Stanza clxxiii. line 1.

The village of Nemi was near the Arician retreat of Egeria, and, from the shades which embosomed the temple of Diana, has preserved to this day its distinctive appellation of *The Grove.* Nemi is but an evening's ride from the comfortable inn of Albano.

71.

And afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast, &c. &c.

Stanza clxxiv. lines 2, 3, and 4.

The whole declivity of the Alban hill is of unrivalled beauty, and from the convent on the highest point, which has succeeded to the temple of the Latian Jupiter, the prospect embraces all the objects alluded to in the cited stanza: the Mediterranean; the whole scene of the latter half of the Æneid, and the coast from beyond the mouth of the Tiber to the headland of Circæum and the Cape of Terracina.

The site of Cicero's villa may be supposed either at the Grotta Ferrata, or at the Tusculum of Prince Lucien Buonaparte.

The former was thought some years ago the actual site, as may be seen from Middleton's Life of Cicero. At present it has lost something of its credit, except for the Domenichinos. Nine monks of the Greek order live there, and the adjoining villa is a cardinal's summer-house. The other villa, called Rufinella, is on the summit of the hill above Frascati, and many rich remains of Tusculum have been found there, besides seventy-two statues of different merit and preservation, and seven busts.

From the same eminence are seen the Sabine hills, embosomed in which lies the long valley of Rustica. There are several circumstances which tend to establish the identity of this valley with the "*Ustica*" of Horace; and it seems possible that the mosaic pavement which the peasants uncover by throwing up the earth of a vineyard may belong to his villa. Rustica is pronounced short, not according to our stress upon—"*Usticæ cubantis.*"—It is more rational to think that we are wrong than that the inhabitants of this secluded valley have changed their tone in this word. The addition of the consonant prefixed is nothing: yet it is necessary to be aware that Rustica may be a modern name which the peasants may have caught from the antiquaries.

The villa, or the mosaic, is in a vineyard on a knoll covered with chestnut trees. A stream runs down the valley, and although it is not true, as said in the guide books, that this stream is called Licenza, yet there is a village on a rock at the head of the valley which is so denominated, and which may have taken its name from the Digentia. Licenza contains 700 inhabitants. On a peak a little way beyond is Civitella, containing 300. On the banks of the Anio, a little before you turn up into Valle Rustica, to the left, about an hour from the *villa*, is a town called Vicovaro, another favourable coincidence with the *Varia* of the poet. At the end of the valley, towards the Anio, there is a bare hill, crowned with a little town called Bardela. At the foot of this hill the rivulet of Licenza flows, and is almost absorbed in a wide sandy bed before it reaches the Anio. Nothing can be more fortunate for the lines of the poet, whether in a metaphorical or direct sense:

> "Me quotiens reficit gelidus Digentia rivus.
> Quem Mandela bibit rugosus frigore pagus."

The stream is clear high up the valley, but before it reaches the hill of Bardela looks green and yellow like a sulphur rivulet.

Rocca Giovane, a ruined village in the hills, half an hour's walk from the vineyard where the pavement is shown, does seem to be the site of the fane of Vacuna, and an inscription found there tells that this temple of the Sabine Victory was repaired by Vespasian[1]. With these helps, and a position corresponding exactly to every thing which the poet has told us of his retreat, we may feel tolerably secure of our site.

The hill which should be Lucretilis is called Campanile, and by following up the rivulet to the pretended Bandusia, you come to the roots of the higher mountain Gennaro. Singularly enough, the only spot of ploughed land in the whole valley is on the knoll where this Bandusia rises.

[1] IMP. CÆSAR VESPASIANVS
PONTIFEX MAXIMVS. TRIB.
POTEST. CENSOR. ÆDEM
VICTORIÆ. VETVSTATE ILLAPSAM.
SVA. IMPENSA. RESTITVIT.

"....tu frigus amabile
Fessis vomere tauris
Præbes, et pecori vago."

The peasants show another spring near the mosaic pavement which they call "Oradina," and which flows down the hills into a tank, or mill-dam, and thence trickles over into the Digentia.

But we must not hope

"To trace the Muses upwards to their spring"

by exploring the windings of the romantic valley in search of the Bandusian fountain. It seems strange that any one should have thought Bandusia a fountain of the Digentia—Horace has not let drop a word of it; and this immortal spring has in fact been discovered in possession of the holders of many good things in Italy, the monks. It was attached to the church of St. Gervais and Protais near Venusia, where it was most likely to be found [1]. We shall not be so lucky as a late traveller in finding the *occasional pine* still pendent on the poetic villa. There is not a pine in the whole valley, but there are two cypresses, which he evidently took, or mistook, for the tree in the ode [2]. The truth is, that the pine is now, as it was in the days of Virgil, a garden tree, and it was not at all likely to be found in the craggy acclivities of the valley of Rustica. Horace probably had one of them in the orchard close above his farm, immediately overshadowing his villa, not on the rocky heights at some distance from his abode. The tourist may have easily supposed himself to have seen this pine figured in the above cypresses, for the orange and lemon trees which throw such a bloom over his description of the royal gardens at Naples, unless they have been since displaced, were assuredly only acacias and other common garden shrubs [3]. The extreme disappointment experienced by choosing the Classical Tourist as a guide in Italy must be allowed to find vent in a few observations, which, it is asserted without fear of contradiction, will be con-

1 See—Historical Illustrations of the Fourth Canto, p. 43.

2 See—Classical Tour, &c. chap. vii. p. 250. vol. ii.

3 "Under our windows, and bordering on the beach, is the royal garden, laid out in parterres, and walks shaded by rows of orange trees." Classical Tour, &c. chap. xi. vol. ii. oct. 365.

firmed by every one who has selected the same conductor through the same country. This author is in fact one of the most inaccurate, unsatisfactory writers that have in our times attained a temporary reputation, and is very seldom to be trusted even when he speaks of objects which he must be presumed to have seen. His errors, from the simple exaggeration to the downright misstatement, are so frequent as to induce a suspicion that he had either never visited the spots described, or had trusted to the fidelity of former writers. Indeed the Classical Tour has every characteristic of a mere compilation of former notices, strung together upon a very slender thread of personal observation, and swelled out by those decorations which are so easily supplied by a systematic adoption of all the common places of praise, applied to every thing, and therefore signifying nothing.

The style which one person thinks cloggy and cumbrous, and unsuitable, may be to the taste of others, and such may experience some salutary excitement in ploughing through the periods of the Classical Tour. It must be said, however, that polish and weight are apt to beget an expectation of value. It is amongst the pains of the damned to toil up a climax with a huge round *stone*.

The tourist had the choice of his words, but there was no such latitude allowed to that of his sentiments. The love of virtue and of liberty, which must have distinguished the character, certainly adorns the pages of Mr. Eustace, and the gentlemanly spirit, so recommendatory either in an author or his productions, is very conspicuous throughout the Classical Tour. But these generous qualities are the foliage of such a performance, and may be spread about it so prominently and profusely, as to embarrass those who wish to see and find the fruit at hand. The unction of the divine, and the exhortations of the moralist, may have made this work something more and better than a book of travels, but they have not made it a book of travels; and this observation applies more especially to that enticing method of instruction conveyed by the perpetual introduction of the same Gallic Helot to reel and bluster before the rising generation, and terrify it into decency by the display

of all the excesses of the revolution. An animosity against atheists and regicides in general, and Frenchmen specifically, may be honourable, and may be useful, as a record; but that antidote should either be administered in any work rather than a tour, or, at least, should be served up apart, and not so mixed with the whole mass of information and reflection, as to give a bitterness to every page: for who would choose to have the antipathies of any man, however just, for his travelling companions? A tourist, unless he aspires to the credit of prophecy, is not answerable for the changes which may take place in the country which he describes; but his reader may very fairly esteem all his political portraits and deductions as so much waste paper, the moment they cease to assist, and more particularly if they obstruct, his actual survey.

Neither encomium nor accusation of any government, or governors, is meant to be here offered; but it is stated as an incontrovertible fact, that the change operated, either by the address of the late imperial system, or by the disappointment of every expectation by those who have succeeded to the Italian thrones, has been so considerable, and is so apparent, as not only to put Mr. Eustace's antigallican philippics entirely out of date, but even to throw some suspicion upon the competency and candour of the author himself. A remarkable example may be found in the instance of Bologna, over whose papal attachments, and consequent desolation, the tourist pours forth such strains of condolence and revenge, made louder by the borrowed trumpet of Mr. Burke. Now Bologna is at this moment, and has been for some years, notorious amongst the states of Italy for its attachment to revolutionary principles, and was almost the only city which made any demonstrations in favour of the unfortunate Murat. This change may, however, have been made since Mr. Eustace visited this country; but the traveller whom he has thrilled with horror at the projected stripping of the copper from the cupola of St. Peter's, must be much relieved to find that sacrilege out of the power of the French, or any other plunderers, the cupola being covered with *lead*[1].

[1] "What, then, will be the astonishment, or rather the horror, of my reader when I inform him . . . . . the French Committee turned

If the conspiring voice of otherwise rival critics had not given considerable currency to the Classical Tour, it would have been unnecessary to warn the reader, that however it may adorn his library, it will be of little or no service to him in his carriage; and if the judgment of those critics had hitherto been suspended, no attempt would have been made to anticipate their decision. As it is, those who stand in the relation of posterity to Mr. Eustace may be permitted to appeal from cotemporary praises, and are perhaps more likely to be just in proportion as the causes of love and hatred are the farther removed. This appeal had, in some measure, been made before the above remarks were written; for one of the most respectable of the Florentine publishers, who had been persuaded by the repeated inquiries of those on their journey southwards to reprint a cheap edition of the Classical Tour, was, by the concurring advice of returning travellers, induced to abandon his design, although he had already arranged his types and paper, and had struck off one or two of the first sheets.

The writer of these notes would wish to part (like Mr. Gibbon) on good terms with the Pope and the Cardinals, but he does not think it necessary to extend the same discreet silence to their humble partisans.

its attention to Saint Peter's, and employed a company of Jews to estimate and purchase the gold, silver, and bronze that adorn the inside of the edifice, as well as the copper that covers the vaults and dome on the outside." Chap. iv. p. 130. vol. ii. The story about the Jews is positively denied at Rome.

THE GIAOUR,

A FRAGMENT OF

A TURKISH TALE.

" One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
" Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes—
" To which Life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
" For which joy hath no balm—and affliction no sting."

Moore.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN

OF ADMIRATION OF HIS GENIUS;

RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER,

AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP;

THIS PRODUCTION IS INSCRIBED BY

HIS OBLIGED AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,

BYRON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE tale which these disjointed fragments present is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the "olden time;" or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprise. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprise, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.

THE GIAOUR.

No breath of air to break the wave
That rolls below the Athenian's grave,
That tomb [1] which, gleaming o'er the cliff,
First greets the homeward-veering skiff,
High o'er the land he saved in vain:
When shall such hero live again?
* * * * * *

Fair clime! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek
Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the eastern wave:
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odours there!

For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the Nightingale, [2]
The maid for whom his melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale:
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,
Far from the winters of the west,
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by nature given
In softest incense back to heaven;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
And many a summer flower is there,
And many a shade that love might share,
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate for a guest;
Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's guitar [3]
Is heard, and seen the evening star;
Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay.
Strange—that where Nature loved to trace,
As if for Gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mix'd
Within the paradise she fix'd,
There man, enamour'd of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness,

And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
That tasks not one laborious hour;
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land,
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly woos him—but to spare!
Strange—that where all is peace beside
There passion riots in her pride,
And lust and rapine wildly reign
To darken o'er the fair domain.
It is as though the fiends prevail'd
Against the seraphs they assail'd,
And, fix'd on heavenly thrones, should dwell
The freed inheritors of hell;
So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,
So curst the tyrants that destroy!

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,)
And mark'd the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that 's there,
The fix'd yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy (4)

Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first, last look by death reveal'd! (5)
Such is the aspect of this shore;
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling past away!
Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd earth!

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?
These waters blue that round you lave,
Oh servile offspring of the free—

Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
These scenes, their story not unknown,
Arise, and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear
That Tyranny shall quake to hear,
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame:
For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeath'd by bleeding Sire to Son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page,
Attest it many a deathless age!
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes, though the general doom
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,
The mountains of their native land!
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die!
'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
Each step from splendour to disgrace;
Enough—no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
Yes! Self-abasement paved the way
To vilain-bonds and despot-sway.

What can he tell who treads thy shore?
No legend of thine olden time,

No theme on which the muse might soar,
High as thine own in days of yore,
When man was worthy of thy clime.
The hearts within thy valleys bred,
The fiery souls that might have led
Thy sons to deeds sublime,
Now crawl from cradle to the grave,
Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave, (6)
And callous, save to crime;
Stain'd with each evil that pollutes
Mankind, where least above the brutes;
Without even savage virtue blest,
Without one free or valiant breast.
Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
Proverbial wiles, and ancient craft;
In this the subtle Greek is found,
For this, and this alone, renown'd.
In vain might Liberty invoke
The spirit to its bondage broke,
Or raise the neck that courts the yoke:
No more her sorrows I bewail,
Yet this will be a mournful tale,
And they who listen may believe,
Who heard it first had cause to grieve.
* * * * * *

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
The shadows of the rocks advancing,
Start on the fisher's eye like boat
Of island-pirate or Mainote;
And fearful for his light caique,
He shuns the near but doubtful creek:

Though worn and weary with his toil,
And cumber'd with his scaly spoil,
Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
Till Port Leone's safer shore
Receives him by the lovely light
That best becomes an Eastern night.
* * * * * * *

Who thundering comes on blackest steed,
With slacken'd bit and hoof of speed?
Beneath the clattering iron's sound
The cavern'd echoes wake around
In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
The foam that streaks the courser's side
Seems gather'd from the ocean-tide:
Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
There 's none within his rider's breast:
And though to-morrow's tempest lower,
'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour! (7)
I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
But in thy lineaments I trace
What time shall strengthen, not efface:
Though young and pale, that sallow front
Is scathed by fiery passion's brunt;
Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
As meteor-like thou glidest by,
Right well I view and deem thee one
Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

On—on he hasten'd, and he drew
My gaze of wonder as he flew:

Though like a demon of the night
He pass'd and vanish'd from my sight,
His aspect and his air impress'd
A troubled memory on my breast,
And long upon my startled ear
Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
He spurs his steed; he nears the steep,
That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep;
He winds around; he hurries by;
The rock relieves him from mine eye;
For well I ween unwelcome he
Whose glance is fix'd on those that flee;
And not a star but shines too bright
On him who takes such timeless flight.
He wound along; but ere he pass'd
One glance he snatch'd, as if his last,
A moment check'd his wheeling steed,
A moment breathed him from his speed,
A moment on his stirrup stood—
Why looks he o'er the olive wood?
The crescent glimmers on the hill,
The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still:
Though too remote for sound to wake
In echoes of the far tophaike, (8)
The flashes of each joyous peal
Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal.
To-night, set Rhamazani's sun;
To-night, the Bairam feast 's begun;
To-night—but who and what art thou
Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
And what are these to thine or thee,
That thou should'st either pause or flee?

He stood—some dread was on his face,
Soon Hatred settled in its place:
It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient Anger's hasty blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent, his eye was glazed;
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
And sternly shook his hand on high,
As doubting to return or fly:
Impatient of his flight delay'd,
Here loud his raven charger neigh'd—
Down glanced that hand, and grasp'd his blade;
That sound had burst his waking dream,
As Slumber starts at owlet's scream.
The spur hath lanced his courser's sides;
Away, away, for life he rides:
Swift as the hurl'd on high jerreed [9]
Springs to the touch his startled steed;
The rock is doubled, and the shore
Shakes with the clattering tramp no more;
The crag is won, no more is seen
His Christian crest and haughty mien.
'Twas but an instant he restrain'd
That fiery barb so sternly rein'd;
'Twas but a moment that he stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued;
But in that instant o'er his soul
Winters of Memory seem'd to roll,
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime.

O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears,
Such moment pours the grief of years:
What felt *he* then, at once opprest
By all that most distracts the breast?
That pause, which ponder'd o'er his fate,
Oh, who its dreary length shall date!
Though in Time's record nearly nought,
It was Eternity to Thought!
For infinite as boundless space
The thought that Conscience must embrace,
Which in itself can comprehend
Woe without name, or hope, or end.

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone;
And did he fly or fall alone?
Woe to that hour he came or went!
The curse for Hassan's sin was sent
To turn a palace to a tomb:
He came, he went, like the Simoom, [10]
That harbinger of fate and gloom,
Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
The very cypress droops to death—
Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is fled,
The only constant mourner o'er the dead!

The steed is vanish'd from the stall;
No serf is seen in Hassan's hall;
The lonely Spider's thin gray pall
Waves slowly widening o'er the wall;
The Bat builds in his Haram bower;
And in the fortress of his power
The Owl usurps the beacon-tower;

The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim,
With baffled thirst, and famine, grim;
For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.
'Twas sweet of yore to see it play
And chase the sultriness of day,
As springing high the silver dew
In whirls fantastically flew,
And flung luxurious coolness round
The air, and verdure o'er the ground.
'Twas sweet, when cloudless stars were bright,
To view the wave of watery light,
And hear its melody by night.
And oft had Hassan's Childhood play'd
Around the verge of that cascade;
And oft upon his mother's breast
That sound had harmonized his rest;
And oft had Hassan's Youth along
Its bank been soothed by Beauty's song;
And softer seem'd each melting tone
Of Music mingled with its own.
But ne'er shall Hassan's Age repose
Along the brink at Twilight's close:
The stream that fill'd that font is fled—
The blood that warm'd his heart is shed!
And here no more shall human voice
Be heard to rage, regret, rejoice.
The last sad note that swell'd the gale
Was woman's wildest funeral wail:
That quench'd in silence, all is still,
But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill:

Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
No hand shall close its clasp again.
On desert sands 'twere joy to scan
The rudest steps of fellow man,
So here the very voice of Grief
Might wake an Echo like relief—
At least 'twould say, " all are not gone;
" There lingers Life, though but in one—"
For many a gilded chamber's there,
Which Solitude might well forbear;
Within that dome as yet Decay
Hath slowly work'd her cankering way—
But gloom is gather'd o'er the gate,
Nor there the Fakir's self will wait;
Nor there will wandering Dervise stay,
For bounty cheers not his delay;
Nor there will weary stranger halt
To bless the sacred " bread and salt." (11)
Alike must Wealth and Poverty
Pass heedless and unheeded by,
For Courtesy and Pity died
With Hassan on the mountain side.
His roof, that refuge unto men,
Is Desolation's hungry den.
The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labour,
Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre! (12)
* * * * * * *

I hear the sound of coming feet,
But not a voice mine ear to greet;
More near—each turban I can scan,
And silver-sheathed ataghan; (13)

The foremost of the band is seen
An Emir by his garb of green: [14]
" Ho! who art thou?—this low salam [15]
" Replies of Moslem faith I am.
" The burthen ye so gently bear
" Seems one that claims your utmost care,
" And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,
" My humble bark would gladly wait."

" Thou speakest sooth; thy skiff unmoor,
" And waft us from the silent shore;
" Nay, leave the sail still furl'd, and ply
" The nearest oar that's scatter'd by,
" And midway to those rocks where sleep
" The channel'd waters dark and deep.
" Rest from your task—so—bravely done,
" Our course has been right swiftly run;
" Yet 'tis the longest voyage, I trow,
" That one of—" * * * * .
* * * * * * * *

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
The calm wave rippled to the bank;
I watch'd it as it sank, methought
Some motion from the current caught
Bestirr'd it more,—'twas but the beam
That checker'd o'er the living stream:
I gazed, till vanishing from view,
Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
Still less and less, a speck of white
That gemm'd the tide, then mock'd the sight;

And all its hidden secrets sleep,
Known but to Genii of the deep,
Which, trembling in their coral caves,
They dare not whisper to the waves.
* * * * * *

As rising on its purple wing
The insect-queen[16] of eastern spring,
O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer
Invites the young pursuer near,
And leads him on from flower to flower
A weary chase and wasted hour,
Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
With panting heart and tearful eye:
So Beauty lures the full-grown child,
With hue as bright, and wing as wild;
A chase of idle hopes and fears,
Begun in folly, closed in tears.
If won, to equal ills betray'd,
Woe waits the insect and the maid;
A life of pain, the loss of peace,
From infant's play, and man's caprice:
The lovely toy so fiercely sought
Hath lost its charm by being caught,
For every touch that wooed its stay
Hath brush'd its brightest hues away,
Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
'Tis left to fly or fall alone.
With wounded wing, or bleeding breast,
Ah! where shall either victim rest?
Can this with faded pinion soar
From rose to tulip as before?

Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
Find joy within her broken bower?
No: gayer insects fluttering by
Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
And lovelier things have mercy shown
To every failing but their own,
And every woe a tear can claim
Except an erring sister's shame.
* * * * * *

The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
Is like the Scorpion girt by fire,
In circle narrowing as it glows,
The flames around their captive close,
Till inly search'd by thousand throes,
And maddening in her ire,
One sad and sole relief she knows,
The sting she nourish'd for her foes,
Whose venom never yet was vain,
Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
And darts into her desperate brain:
So do the dark in soul expire,
Or live like Scorpion girt by fire; (17)
So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven,
Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death!
* * * * * *

Black Hassan from the Haram flies,
Nor bends on woman's form his eyes;
The unwonted chase each hour employs,
Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.

Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
Doth Leila there no longer dwell?
That tale can only Hassan tell:
Strange rumours in our city say
Upon that eve she fled away
When Rhamazan's [18] last sun was set,
And flashing from each minaret
Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast
Of Bairam through the boundless East.
'Twas then she went as to the bath,
Which Hassan vainly search'd in wrath;
For she was flown her master's rage
In likeness of a Georgian page,
And far beyond the Moslem's power
Had wrong'd him with the faithless Giaour.
Somewhat of this had Hassan deem'd;
But still so fond, so fair she seem'd,
Too well he trusted to the slave
Whose treachery deserved a grave:
And on that eve had gone to mosque,
And thence to feast in his kiosk.
Such is the tale his Nubians tell,
Who did not watch their charge too well;
But others say, that on that night,
By pale Phingari's [19] trembling light,
The Giaour upon his jet black steed
Was seen, but seen alone to speed
With bloody spur along the shore,
Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

* * * * * * *

‡

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
It will assist thy fancy well;
As large, as languishingly dark,
But Soul beam'd forth in every spark
That darted from beneath the lid,
Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.[20]
Yea, *Soul*, and should our prophet say
That form was nought but breathing clay,
By Alla! I would answer nay;
Though on Al-Sirat's[21] arch I stood,
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
With Paradise within my view,
And all his Houris beckoning through.
Oh! who young Leila's glance could read
And keep that portion of his creed[22]
Which saith that woman is but dust,
A soulless toy for tyrant's lust?
On her might Muftis gaze, and own
That through her eye the Immortal shone;
On her fair cheek's unfading hue
The young pomegranate's[23] blossoms strew
Their bloom in blushes ever new;
Her hair in hyacinthine[24] flow,
When left to roll its folds below,
As midst her handmaids in the hall
She stood superior to them all,
Hath swept the marble where her feet
Gleam'd whiter than the mountain sleet
Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
It fell, and caught one stain of earth.

The cygnet nobly walks the water;
So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,
The loveliest bird of Franguestan! (25)
As rears her crest the ruffled Swan,
And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
When pass the steps of stranger man
Along the banks that bound her tide;
Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck:—
Thus arm'd with beauty would she check
Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze
Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise.
Thus high and graceful was her gait;
Her heart as tender to her mate;
Her mate—stern Hassan, who was he?
Alas! that name was not for thee!
* * * * * *

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en
With twenty vassals in his train,
Each arm'd, as best becomes a man,
With arquebuss and ataghan;
The chief before, as deck'd for war,
Bears in his belt the scimitar
Stain'd with the best of Arnaut blood,
When in the pass the rebels stood,
And few return'd to tell the tale
Of what befell in Parne's vale.
The pistols which his girdle bore
Were those that once a pasha wore,
Which still, though gemm'd and boss'd with gold,
Even robbers tremble to behold.

'Tis said he goes to woo a bride
More true than her who left his side;
The faithless slave that broke her bower,
And, worse than faithless, for a Giaour!
* * * * * *

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
And sparkle in the fountain rill,
Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
Draw blessings from the mountaineer:
Here may the loitering merchant Greek
Find that repose 'twere vain to seek
In cities lodged too near his lord,
And trembling for his secret hoard—
Here may he rest where none can see,
In crowds a slave, in deserts free;
And with forbidden wine may stain
The bowl a Moslem must not drain.
* * * * * *

The foremost Tartar's in the gap,
Conspicuous by his yellow cap;
The rest in lengthening line the while
Wind slowly through the long defile:
Above, the mountain rears a peak,
Where vultures whet the thirsty beak,
And theirs may be a feast to-night,
Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light;
Beneath, a river's wintry stream
Has shrunk before the summer beam,
And left a channel bleak and bare,
Save shrubs that spring to perish there:

Each side the midway path there lay
Small broken crags of granite gray,
By time, or mountain lightning, riven
From summits clad in mists of heaven;
For where is he that hath beheld
The peak of Liakura unveil'd?
* * * * *

They reach the grove of pine at last:
"Bismillah![26] now the peril 's past;
"For yonder view the opening plain,
"And there we 'll prick our steeds amain:"
The Chiaus spake, and as he said,
A bullet whistled o'er his head;
The foremost Tartar bites the ground!
Scarce had they time to check the rein,
Swift from their steeds the riders bound;
But three shall never mount again:
Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
The dying ask revenge in vain.
With steel unsheath'd, and carbine bent,
Some o'er their courser's harness leant,
Half shelter'd by the steed;
Some fly behind the nearest rock,
And there await the coming shock,
Nor tamely stand to bleed
Beneath the shaft of foes unseen,
Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
Stern Hassan only from his horse
Disdains to light, and keeps his course,
Till fiery flashes in the van
Proclaim too sure the robber-clan

Have well secured the only way
Could now avail the promised prey;
Then curl'd his very beard [27] with ire,
And glared his eye with fiercer fire:
" Though far and near the bullets hiss,
" I 've scaped a bloodier hour than this."
And now the foe their covert quit,
And call his vassals to submit;
But Hassan's frown and furious word
Are dreaded more than hostile sword,
Nor of his little band a man
Resign'd carbine or ataghan,
Nor rais'd the craven cry, Amaun! [28]
In fuller sight, more near and near,
The lately ambush'd foes appear,
And, issuing from the grove, advance
Some who on battle-charger prance.
Who leads them on with foreign brand,
Far flashing in his red right hand?
" 'Tis he! 'tis he! I know him now;
" I know him by his pallid brow;
" I know him by the evil eye [29]
" That aids his envious treachery;
" I know him by his jet-black barb:
" Though now array'd in Arnaut garb,
" Apostate from his own vile faith,
" It shall not save him from the death:
" 'Tis he! well met in any hour,
" Lost Leila's love, accursed Giaour!"

As rolls the river into ocean,
In sable torrent wildly streaming;

As the sea-tide's opposing motion,
In azure column proudly gleaming,
Beats back the current many a rood,
In curling foam and mingling flood,
While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
Roused by the blast of winter, rave;
Through sparkling spray, in thundering clash,
The lightnings of the waters flash
In awful whiteness o'er the shore,
That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
Thus—as the stream and ocean greet,
With waves that madden as they meet—
Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
And fate, and fury, drive along.
The bickering sabres' shivering jar;
And pealing wide or ringing near
Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
The deathshot hissing from afar;
The shock, the shout, the groan of war,
Reverberate along that vale,
More suited to the shepherd's tale:
Though few the numbers—theirs the strife,
That neither spares nor speaks for life!
Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press
To seize and share the dear caress;
But Love itself could never pant
For all that Beauty sighs to grant
With half the fervour Hate bestows
Upon the last embrace of foes,
When grappling in the fight they fold
Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold:

Friends meet to part; Love laughs at faith;
True foes, once met, are join'd till death!
* * * * * * *

With sabre shiver'd to the hilt,
Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
Yet strain'd within the sever'd hand
Which quivers round that faithless brand;
His turban far behind him roll'd,
And cleft in twain its firmest fold;
His flowing robe by falchion torn,
And crimson as those clouds of morn
That, streak'd with dusky red, portend
The day shall have a stormy end;
A stain on every bush that bore
A fragment of his palampore,[30]
His breast with wounds unnumber'd riven,
His back to earth, his face to heaven,
Fall'n Hassan lies—his unclosed eye
Yet lowering on his enemy,
As if the hour that seal'd his fate
Surviving left his quenchless hate;
And o'er him bends that foe with brow
As dark as his that bled below.—
* * * * * *

" Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave,
" But his shall be a redder grave;
" Her spirit pointed well the steel
" Which taught that felon heart to feel.
" He call'd the Prophet, but his power
" Was vain against the vengeful Giaour:

" He call'd on Alla—but the word
" Arose unheeded or unheard.
" Thou Paynim fool! could Leila's prayer
" Be pass'd, and thine accorded there?
" I watch'd my time, I leagued with these,
" The traitor in his turn to seize;
" My wrath is wreak'd, the deed is done,
" And now I go—but go alone."

* * * * * *

* * * * * *

The browsing camels' bells are tinkling:
His Mother look'd from her lattice high—
She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
The pasture green beneath her eye,
She saw the planets faintly twinkling:
" 'Tis twilight—sure his train is nigh."
She could not rest in the garden-bower,
But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower:
" Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,
" Nor shrink they from the summer heat;
" Why sends not the Bridegroom his promised gift?
" Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift?
" Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now
" Has gain'd our nearest mountain's brow,
" And warily the steep descends,
" And now within the valley bends;
" And he bears the gift at his saddle bow—
" How could I deem his courser slow?
" Right well my largess shall repay
" His welcome speed, and weary way."

The Tartar lighted at the gate,
But scarce upheld his fainting weight:
His swarthy visage spake distress,
But this might be from weariness;
His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,
But these might be from his courser's side;
He drew the token from his vest—
Angel of Death! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest!
His calpac [31] rent—his caftan red—
"Lady, a fearful bride thy Son hath wed:
"Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
"But this empurpled pledge to bear.
"Peace to the brave! whose blood is spilt:
"Woe to the Giaour! for his the guilt."
* * * * * * *

A turban [32] carved in coarsest stone,
A pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
Whereon can now be scarcely read
The Koran verse that mourns the dead,
Point out the spot where Hassan fell
A victim in that lonely dell.
There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
As e'er at Mecca bent the knee;
As ever scorn'd forbidden wine,
Or pray'd with face towards the shrine,
In orisons resumed anew
At solemn sound of "Alla Hu!" [33]
Yet died he by a stranger's hand,
And stranger in his native land;
Yet died he as in arms he stood,
And unavenged, at least in blood.

But him the maids of Paradise
Impatient to their halls invite,
And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes
On him shall glance for ever bright;
They come—their kerchiefs green they wave, (34)
And welcome with a kiss the brave!
Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour
Is worthiest an immortal bower.
* * * * * * *

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging Monkir's (35) scythe;
And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost Eblis' (36) throne;
And fire unquench'd, unquenchable,
Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;
Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
The tortures of that inward hell!
But first, on earth as Vampire (37) sent,
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race;
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life;
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse:
Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know the dæmon for their sire,
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
Thy flowers are wither'd on the stem.
But one that for thy crime must fall,
The youngest, most beloved of all,

Shall bless thee with a *father*'s name—
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!
Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
And the last glassy glance must view
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
Then with unhallow'd hand shalt tear
The tresses of her yellow hair,
Of which in life a lock when shorn
Affection's fondest pledge was worn;
But now is borne away by thee,
Memorial of thine agony!
Wet with thine own best blood shall drip [38]
Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;
Then stalking to thy sullen grave,
Go—and with Gouls and Afrits rave;
Till these in horror shrink away
From spectre more accursed than they!
* * * * * *

" How name ye yon lone Caloyer?
" His features I have scann'd before
" In mine own land: 'tis many a year,
" Since, dashing by the lonely shore,
" I saw him urge as fleet a steed
" As ever served a horseman's need.
" But once I saw that face, yet then
" It was so mark'd with inward pain,
" I could not pass it by again;
" It breathes the same dark spirit now,
" As death were stamp'd upon his brow."

" 'Tis twice three years at summer tide
" Since first among our freres he came;
" And here it soothes him to abide
" For some dark deed he will not name.
" But never at our vesper prayer,
" Nor e'er before confession chair
" Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
" Incense or anthem to the skies,
" But broods within his cell alone,
" His faith and race alike unknown.
" The sea from Paynim land he crost,
" And here ascended from the coast;
" Yet seems he not of Othman race,
" But only Christian in his face:
" I 'd judge him some stray renegade,
" Repentant of the change he made,
" Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
" Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine.
" Great largess to these walls he brought,
" And thus our abbot's favour bought;
" But were I Prior, not a day
" Should brook such stranger's further stay,
" Or pent within our penance cell
" Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
" Much in his visions mutters he
" Of maiden 'whelm'd beneath the sea;
" Of sabres clashing, foemen flying,
" Wrongs avenged, and Moslem dying.
" On cliff he hath been known to stand,
" And rave as to some bloody hand
" Fresh sever'd from its parent limb,
" Invisible to all but him,

" Which beckons onward to his grave,
" And lures to leap into the wave."

* * * * * *
* * * * * *

Dark and unearthly is the scowl
That glares beneath his dusky cowl:
The flash of that dilating eye
Reveals too much of times gone by;
Though varying, indistinct its hue,
Oft will his glance the gazer rue,
For in it lurks that nameless spell
Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
A spirit yet unquell'd and high,
That claims and keeps ascendancy;
And like the bird whose pinions quake,
But cannot fly the gazing snake,
Will others quail beneath his look,
Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook.
From him the half-affrighted Friar
When met alone would fain retire,
As if that eye and bitter smile
Transferr'd to others fear and guile:
Not oft to smile descendeth he,
And when he doth 'tis sad to see
That he but mocks at Misery.
How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
Then fix once more as if for ever;
As if his sorrow or disdain
Forbade him e'er to smile again.
Well were it so—such ghastly mirth
From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth.

But sadder still it were to trace
What once were feelings in that face:
Time hath not yet the features fix'd,
But brighter traits with evil mix'd;
And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded
Even by the crimes through which it waded:
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;
The close observer can espy
A noble soul, and lineage high:
Alas! though both bestow'd in vain,
Which Grief could change, and Guilt could stain,
It was no vulgar tenement
To which such lofty gifts were lent,
And still with little less than dread
On such the sight is riveted.
The roofless cot, decay'd and rent,
Will scarce delay the passer by;
The tower by war or tempest bent,
While yet may frown one battlement,
Demands and daunts the stranger's eye;
Each ivied arch, and pillar lone,
Pleads haughtily for glories gone!

"His floating robe around him folding,
"Slow sweeps he through the column'd aisle;
"With dread beheld, with gloom beholding
"The rites that sanctify the pile.
"But when the anthem shakes the choir,
"And kneel the monks, his steps retire;

" By yonder lone and wavering torch
" His aspect glares within the porch;
" There will he pause till all is done—
" And hear the prayer, but utter none.
" See—by the half-illumined wall
" His hood fly back, his dark hair fall,
" That pale brow wildly wreathing round,
" As if the Gorgon there had bound
" The sablest of the serpent-braid
" That o'er her fearful forehead stray'd:
" For he declines the convent oath,
" And leaves those locks unhallow'd growth,
" But wears our garb in all beside;
" And, not from piety but pride,
" Gives wealth to walls that never heard
" Of his one holy vow nor word.
" Lo!—mark ye, as the harmony
" Peals louder praises to the sky,
" That livid cheek, that stony air
" Of mix'd defiance and despair!
" Saint Francis, keep him from the shrine!
" Else may we dread the wrath divine
" Made manifest by awful sign.
" If ever evil angel bore
" The form of mortal, such he wore:
" By all my hope of sins forgiven,
" Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!"

To love the softest hearts are prone,
But such can ne'er be all his own;
Too timid in his woes to share,
Too meek to meet, or brave despair;

‡

And sterner hearts alone may feel
The wound that time can never heal.
The rugged metal of the mine
Must burn before its surface shine,
But plunged within the furnace-flame,
It bends and melts—though still the same;
Then temper'd to thy want, or will,
'Twill serve thee to defend or kill;
A breast-plate for thine hour of need,
Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;
But if a dagger's form it bear,
Let those who shape its edge, beware!
Thus passion's fire, and woman's art,
Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
From these its form and tone are ta'en,
And what they make it, must remain,
But break—before it bend again.

* * * * * * *
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If solitude succeed to grief,
Release from pain is slight relief;
The vacant bosom's wilderness
Might thank the pang that made it less.
We loathe what none are left to share:
Even bliss—'twere woe alone to bear;
The heart once left thus desolate
Must fly at last for ease—to hate.
It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm around them steal,
And shudder, as the reptiles creep
To revel o'er their rotting sleep,

Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay!
It is as if the desert-bird,[39]
  Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
  To still her famish'd nestlings' scream,
Nor mourns a life to them transferr'd,
Should rend her rash devoted breast,
And find them flown her empty nest.
The keenest pangs the wretched find
  Are rapture to the dreary void,
The leafless desert of the mind,
  The waste of feelings unemploy'd.
Who would be doom'd to gaze upon
A sky without a cloud or sun?
Less hideous far the tempest's roar
Than ne'er to brave the billows more—
Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er,
A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
Unseen to drop by dull decay;—
Better to sink beneath the shock
Than moulder piecemeal on the rock!
* * * * * * *

"Father! thy days have pass'd in peace,
"'Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
"To bid the sins of others cease,
"Thyself without a crime or care,
"Save transient ills that all must bear,
"Has been thy lot from youth to age;
"And thou wilt bless thee from the rage

" Of passions fierce and uncontroll'd,
" Such as thy penitents unfold,
" Whose secret sins and sorrows rest
" Within thy pure and pitying breast.
" My days, though few, have pass'd below
" In much of joy, but more of woe;
" Yet still in hours of love or strife,
" I 've 'scaped the weariness of life:
" Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
" I loathed the languor of repose.
" Now nothing left to love or hate,
" No more with hope or pride elate,
" I 'd rather be the thing that crawls
" Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,
" Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
" Condemn'd to meditate and gaze.
" Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
" For rest—but not to feel 'tis rest.
" Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil;
" And I shall sleep without the dream
" Of what I was, and would be still,
" Dark as to thee my deeds may seem:
" My memory now is but the tomb
" Of joys long dead; my hope, their doom:
" Though better to have died with those
" Than bear a life of lingering woes.
" My spirit shrunk not to sustain
" The searching throes of ceaseless pain;
" Nor sought the self-accorded grave
" Of ancient fool and modern knave:
" Yet death I have not fear'd to meet;
" And in the field it had been sweet,

" Had danger woo'd me on to move
" The slave of glory, not of love.
" I've braved it—not for honour's boast;
" I smile at laurels won or lost;
" To such let others carve their way,
" For high renown, or hireling pay:
" But place again before my eyes
" Aught that I deem a worthy prize,
" The maid I love, the man I hate;
" And I will hunt the steps of fate,
" To save or slay, as these require,
" Through rending steel, and rolling fire:
" Nor needst thou doubt this speech from one
" Who would but do—what he *hath* done.
" Death is but what the haughty brave,
" The weak must bear, the wretch must crave;
" Then let Life go to him who gave:
" I have not quail'd to danger's brow
" When high and happy—need I *now?*
* * * * * * *

" I loved her, friar! nay, adored—
" But these are words that all can use—
" I proved it more in deed than word;
" There 's blood upon that dinted sword,
" A stain its steel can never lose:
" 'Twas shed for her, who died for me,
" It warm'd the heart of one abhorr'd:
" Nay, start not—no—nor bend thy knee,
" Nor midst my sins such act record;
" Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
" For he was hostile to thy creed!

" The very name of Nazarene
" Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.
" Ungrateful fool! since but for brands
" Well wielded in some hardy hands,
" And wounds by Galileans given,
" The surest pass to Turkish heaven,
" For him his Houris still might wait
" Impatient at the prophet's gate.
" I loved her—love will find its way
" Through paths where wolves would fear to prey,
" And if it dares enough, 'twere hard
" If passion met not some reward—
" No matter how, or where, or why,
" I did not vainly seek, nor sigh:
" Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain
" I wish she had not loved again.
" She died—I dare not tell thee how;
" But look—'tis written on my brow!
" There read of Cain the curse and crime,
" In characters unworn by time:
" Still, ere thou dost condemn me, pause;
" Not mine the act, though I the cause.
" Yet did he but what I had done
" Had she been false to more than one.
" Faithless to him, he gave the blow;
" But true to me, I laid him low:
" Howe'er deserved her doom might be,
" Her treachery was truth to me;
" To me she gave her heart, that all
" Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall;
" And I, alas! too late to save!
" Yet all I then could give, I gave,
" 'Twas some relief, our foe a grave.

" His death sits lightly; but her fate
" Has made me—what thou well may'st hate.
" His doom was seal'd—he knew it well,
" Warn'd by the voice of stern Taheer,
" Deep in whose darkly boding ear (40)
" The deathshot peal'd of murder near,
" As filed the troop to where they fell!
" He died too in the battle broil,
" A time that heeds nor pain nor toil;
" One cry to Mahomet for aid,
" One prayer to Alla all he made:
" He knew and cross'd me in the fray—
" I gazed upon him where he lay,
" And watch'd his spirit ebb away:
" Though pierced like pard by hunters' steel,
" He felt not half that now I feel.
" I search'd, but vainly search'd, to find
" The workings of a wounded mind;
" Each feature of that sullen corse
" Betray'd his rage, but no remorse.
" Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
" Despair upon his dying face!
" The late repentance of that hour,
" When Penitence hath lost her power
" To tear one terror from the grave,
" And will not soothe, and can not save.

* * * * * * * *

" The cold in clime are cold in blood,
" Their love can scarce deserve the name;
" But mine was like the lava flood
" That boils in Ætna's breast of flame.

" I cannot prate in puling strain
" Of ladye-love, and beauty's chain:
" If changing cheek, and scorching vein,
" Lips taught to writhe, but not complain,
" If bursting heart, and madd'ning brain,
" And daring deed, and vengeful steel,
" And all that I have felt, and feel,
" Betoken love—that love was mine,
" And shown by many a bitter sign.
" 'Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,
" I knew but to obtain or die.
" I die—but first I have possess'd,
" And come what may, I *have been* blest.
" Shall I the doom I sought upbraid?
" No—reft of all, yet undismay'd
" But for the thought of Leila slain,
" Give me the pleasure with the pain,
" So would I live and love again.
" I grieve, but not, my holy guide!
" For him who dies, but her who died:
" She sleeps beneath the wandering wave—
" Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
" This breaking heart and throbbing head
" Should seek and share her narrow bed.
" She was a form of life and light,
" That, seen, became a part of sight;
" And rose, where'er I turn'd mine eye,
" The Morning-star of Memory!

" Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven;
" A spark of that immortal fire
" With angels shared, by Alla given,
" To lift from earth our low desire.

" Devotion wafts the mind above,
" But Heaven itself descends in love;
" A feeling from the Godhead caught,
" To wean from self each sordid thought;
" A Ray of him who form'd the whole;
" A Glory circling round the soul!
" I grant *my* love imperfect, all
" That mortals by the name miscall;
" Then deem it evil, what thou wilt;
" But say, oh say, *hers* was not guilt!
" She was my life's unerring light:
" That quench'd, what beam shall break my night?
" Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
" Although to death or deadliest ill!
" Why marvel ye, if they who lose
" This present joy, this future hope,
" No more with sorrow meekly cope;
" In phrensy then their fate accuse:
" In madness do those fearful deeds
" That seem to add but guilt to woe?
" Alas! the breast that inly bleeds
" Hath nought to dread from outward blow:
" Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
" Cares little into what abyss.
" Fierce as the gloomy vulture's now
" To thee, old man, my deeds appear:
" I read abhorrence on thy brow,
" And this too was I born to bear!
" 'Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,
" With havock have I mark'd my way:
" But this was taught me by the dove,
" To die—and know no second love.

" This lesson yet hath man to learn,
" Taught by the thing he dares to spurn:
" The bird that sings within the brake,
" The swan that swims upon the lake,
" One mate, and one alone, will take.
" And let the fool still prone to range,
" And sneer on all who cannot change,
" Partake his jest with boasting boys;
" I envy not his varied joys,
" But deem such feeble, heartless man,
" Less than yon solitary swan;
" Far, far beneath the shallow maid
" He left believing and betray'd.
" Such shame at least was never mine—
" Leila! each thought was only thine!
" My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
" My hope on high—my all below.
" Earth holds no other like to thee,
" Or, if it doth, in vain for me:
" For worlds I dare not view the dame
" Resembling thee, yet not the same.
" The very crimes that mar my youth,
" This bed of death—attest my truth!
" 'Tis all too late—thou wert, thou art
" The cherish'd madness of my heart!

" And she was lost—and yet I breathed,
" But not the breath of human life:
" A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
" And stung my every thought to strife.
" Alike all time, abhorr'd all place,
" Shuddering I shrunk from Nature's face,

" Where every hue that charm'd before
" The blackness of my bosom wore.
" The rest thou dost already know,
" And all my sins, and half my woe.
" But talk no more of penitence;
" Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence:
" And if thy holy tale were true,
" The deed that's done canst *thou* undo?
" Think me not thankless—but this grief
" Looks not to priesthood for relief. (41)
" My soul's estate in secret guess:
" But would'st thou pity more, say less.
" When thou canst bid my Leila live,
" Then will I sue thee to forgive;
" Then plead my cause in that high place
" Where purchased masses proffer grace.
" Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
" From forest-cave her shrieking young,
" And calm the lonely lioness:
" But soothe not—mock not *my* distress!

" In earlier days, and calmer hours,
" When heart with heart delights to blend,
" Where bloom my native valley's bowers
" I had—Ah! have I now?—a friend!
" To him this pledge I charge thee send,
" Mémorial of a youthful vow;
" I would remind him of my end:
" Though souls absorb'd like mine allow
" Brief thought to distant friendship's claim,
" Yet dear to him my blighted name.

" 'Tis strange—he prophesied my doom,
" And I have smiled—I then could smile—
" When Prudence would his voice assume,
" And warn—I reck'd not what—the while:
" But now remembrance whispers o'er
" Those accents scarcely mark'd before.
" Say—that his bodings came to pass,
" And he will start to hear their truth,
" And wish his words had not been sooth:
" Tell him, unheeding as I was,
" Through many a busy bitter scene
" Of all our golden youth had been,
" In pain, my faltering tongue had tried
" To bless his memory ere I died;
" But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
" If Guilt should for the guiltless pray.
" I do not ask him not to blame,
" Too gentle he to wound my name;
" And what have I to do with fame?
" I do not ask him not to mourn,
" Such cold request might sound like scorn;
" And what than friendship's manly tear
" May better grace a brother's bier?
" But bear this ring, his own of old,
" And tell him—what thou dost behold!
" The wither'd frame, the ruin'd mind,
" The wrack by passion left behind,
" A shrivell'd scroll, a scatter'd leaf,
" Sear'd by the autumn blast of grief!

* * * * * * *

" Tell me no more of fancy's gleam,
" No, father, no, 'twas not a dream;
" Alas! the dreamer first must sleep,
" I only watch'd, and wish'd to weep;
" But could not, for my burning brow
" Throbb'd to the very brain as now:
" I wish'd but for a single tear,
" As something welcome, new, and dear:
" I wish'd it then, I wish it still;
" Despair is stronger than my will.
" Waste not thine orison, despair
" Is mightier than thy pious prayer:
" I would not, if I might, be blest;
" I want no paradise, but rest.
" 'Twas then, I tell thee, father! then
" I saw her; yes, she lived again;
" And shining in her white symar, (42)
" As through yon pale gray cloud the star
" Which now I gaze on, as on her,
" Who look'd and looks far lovelier;
" Dimly I view its trembling spark;
" To-morrow's night shall be more dark;
" And I, before its rays appear,
" That lifeless thing the living fear.
" I wander, father! for my soul
" Is fleeting towards the final goal.
" I saw her, friar! and I rose
" Forgetful of our former woes;
" And rushing from my couch, I dart,
" And clasp her to my desperate heart;
" I clasp—what is it that I clasp?
" No breathing form within my grasp,

" No heart that beats reply to mine,
" Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine!
" And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
" As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
" Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,
" I care not; so my arms enfold
" The all they ever wish'd to hold.
" Alas! around a shadow prest,
" They shrink upon my lonely breast;
" Yet still 'tis there! In silence stands,
" And beckons with beseeching hands!
" With braided hair, and bright-black eye—
" I knew 'twas false—she could not die!
" But he is dead! within the dell
" I saw him buried where he fell;
" He comes not, for he cannot break
" From earth; why then art thou awake?
" They told me wild waves roll'd above
" The face I view, the form I love;
" They told me—'twas a hideous tale!
" I 'd tell it, but my tongue would fail:
" If true, and from thine ocean-cave
" Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave,
" Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
" This brow that then will burn no more;
" Or place them on my hopeless heart:
" But, shape or shade! whate'er thou art,
" In mercy ne'er again depart!
" Or farther with thee bear my soul
" Than winds can waft or waters roll!

* * * * * * *

" Such is my name, and such my tale.
" Confessor! to thy secret ear
" I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
" And thank thee for the generous tear
" This glazing eye could never shed.
" Then lay me with the humblest dead,
" And, save the cross above my head,
" Be neither name nor emblem spread,
" By prying stranger to be read,
" Or stay the passing pilgrim's tread."

He pass'd—nor of his name and race
Hath left a token or a trace,
Save what the father must not say
Who shrived him on his dying day:
This broken tale was all we knew
Of her he loved, or him he slew. (43)

NOTES.

Note 1, page 161, line 3.

That tomb, which, gleaming o'er the cliff.

A tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed the sepulchre of Themistocles.

Note 2, page 162, line 2.

Sultana of the Nightingale.

The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable. If I mistake not, the "Bulbul of a thousand tales" is one of his appellations.

Note 3, page 162, line 20.

Till the gay mariner's guitar.

The guitar is the constant amusement of the Greek sailor by night: with a steady fair wind, and during a calm, it is accompanied always by the voice, and often by dancing.

Note 4, page 163, last line.

Where cold Obstruction's apathy.

"Ay, but to die and go we know not where,
"To lie in cold obstruction."

Measure for Measure, Act III. 130. Sc. 2.

Note 5, page 164, line 8.

The first, last look by death reveal'd.

I trust that few of my readers have ever had an opportunity

of witnessing what is here attempted in description, but those who have will probably retain a painful remembrance of that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead, a few hours, and but for a few hours, after "the spirit is not there." It is to be remarked in cases of violent death by gun-shot wounds, the expression is always that of languor, whatever the natural energy of the sufferer's character; but in death from a stab the countenance preserves its traits of feeling or ferocity, and the mind its bias, to the last.

Note 6, page 166, line 8.

Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave.

Athens is the property of the Kislar Aga (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode. A pander and eunuch—these are not polite, yet true appellations—now *governs* the *governor* of Athens!

Note 7, page 167, line 17.

'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour.

Infidel.

Note 8, page 168, line 24.

In echoes of the far tophaike.

"Tophaike," musket.—The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset; the illumination of the Mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with *ball*, proclaim it during the night.

Note 9, page 169, line 18.

Swift as the hurl'd on high jerreed.

Jerreed, or Djerrid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision. It is a favourite exercise of the Mussulmans; but I know not if it can be called a *manly* one, since the most expert in the art are the Black Eunuchs of Constantinople.—I think, next to these, a Mamlouk at Smyrna was the most skilful that came within my observation.

Note 10, page 170, line 18.

He came, he went, like the Simoom.

The blast of the desert, fatal to every thing living, and often alluded to in eastern poetry.

Note 11, page 172, line 18.

To bless the sacred "bread and salt."

To partake of food, to break bread and salt with your host, insures the safety of the guest: even though an enemy, his person from that moment is sacred.

Note 12, page 172, line 26.

Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre.

I need hardly observe, that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mahomet; and to say truth, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief, is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valour.

Note 13, page 172, last line.

And silver-sheathed ataghan.

The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.

Note 14, page 173, line 2.

An Emir by his garb of green.

Green is the privileged colour of the prophet's numerous pretended descendants; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is supposed to supersede the necessity of good works: they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.

Note 15, page 173, line 3.

Ho! who art thou?—this low salam.

Salam aleikoum! aleikoum salam! peace be with you; be with you peace—the salutation reserved for the faithful:—to a Christian, "Urlarula," a good journey; or saban hiresem, saban serula; good morn, good even; and sometimes, "may your end be happy;" are the usual salutes.

Note 16, page 174, line 6.

The insect-queen of eastern spring.

The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species.

Note 17, page 175, line 21.

Or live like Scorpion girt by fire.

Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned towards the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict "Felo de se." The scorpions are surely interested in a speedy decision of the question; as, if once fairly established as insect Catos, they will probably be allowed to live as long as they think proper, without being martyred for the sake of an hypothesis.

Note 18, page 176, line 9.

When Rhamazan's last sun was set.

The cannon at sunset close the Rhamazan. See note 8.

Note 19, page 176, line 28.

By pale Phingari's trembling light.

Phingari, the moon.

Note 20, page 177, line 7.

Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.

The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendour, named Schebgerag, "the torch of night;" also, "the cup of the sun," &c. In the first edition "Giamschid" was written as a word of three syllables, so D'Herbelot has it; but I am told Richardson reduces it to a dissyllable, and writes "Jamshid." I have left in the text the orthography of the one with the pronunciation of the other.

Note 21, page 177, line 11.

Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood.

Al-Sirat, the bridge of breadth less than the thread of a

famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a "facilis descensus Averni," not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards for the Jews and Christians.

Note 22, page 177, line 16.

And keep that portion of his creed.

A vulgar error: the Koran allots at least a third of Paradise to well-behaved women; but by far the greater number of Mussulmans interpret the text their own way, and exclude their moieties from heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they cannot discern "any fitness of things" in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the Houris.

Note 23, page 177, line 22.

The young pomegranate's blossoms strew.

An oriental simile, which may perhaps, though fairly stolen, be deemed "plus Arabe qu'en Arabie."

Note 24, page 177, line 24.

Her hair in hyacinthine flow.

Hyacinthine, in Arabic "Sunbul;" as common a thought in the eastern poets as it was among the Greeks.

Note 25, page 178, line 3.

The loveliest bird of Franguestan.

"Franguestan," Circassia.

Note 26, page 180, line 8.

Bismillah! now the peril's past.

Bismillah—"In the name of God;" the commencement of all the chapters of the Koran but one, and of prayer and thanksgiving.

Note 27, page 181, line 3.

Then curl'd his very beard with ire.

A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha's whiskers at a diplomatic audience were no less lively with indignation than a tiger cat's, to the horror of all the dragomans; the portentous mustachios twisted, they stood erect of their own accord, and were expected every moment to change their colour, but at last condescended to subside, which, probably, saved more heads than they contained hairs.

Note 28, page 181, line 13.

Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun.

" Amaun," quarter, pardon.

Note 29, page 181, line 22.

I know him by the evil eye.

The " evil eye," a common superstition in the Levant, and of which the imaginary effects are yet very singular on those who conceive themselves affected.

Note 30, page 183, line 14.

A fragment of his palampore.

The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.

Note 31, page 185, line 9.

His calpac rent—his caftan red.

The " Calpac" is the solid cap or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.

Note 32, page 185, line 15.

A turban carved in coarsest stone.

The turban, pillar, and inscriptive verse, decorate the tombs of the Osmanlies, whether in the cemetery or the wilderness. In the mountains you frequently pass similar mementos: and on inquiry you are informed that they record some victim of rebellion, plunder, or revenge.

Note 33, page 185, line 26.

At solemn sound of "Alla Hu!"

"Alla Hu!" the concluding words of the Muezzin's call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the Minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice, which is frequently the case, the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.

Note 34, page 186, line 5.

They come—their kerchiefs green they wave.

The following is part of a battle song of the Turks:—"I see "—I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a hand-"kerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, Come, kiss me, "for I love thee," &c.

Note 35, page 186, line 10.

Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe.

Monkir and Nekir are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight noviciate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two, and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.

Note 36, page 186, line 12.

To wander round lost Eblis' throne.

Eblis, the Oriental Prince of Darkness.

Note 37, page 186, line 17.

But first, on earth as Vampire sent.

The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr. Southey, in the notes on Thalaba, quotes about these "Vroucolochas," as he calls them. The Romaic term is "Vardoulacha." I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that

" Broucolokas" is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the Devil.—The moderns, however, use the word I mention.

Note 38, page 187, line 13.

Wet with thine own best blood shall drip.

The freshness of the face, and the wetness of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a Vampire. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most *incredibly* attested.

Note 39, page 193, line 3.

It is as if the desert-bird.

The pelican is, I believe, the bird so libelled, by the imputation of feeding her chickens with her blood.

Note 40, page 197, line 5.

Deep in whose darkly boding ear.

This superstition of a second-hearing (for I never met with downright second-sight in the East) fell once under my own observation.—On my third journey to Cape Colonna early in 1811, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish Tahiri riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand, as if in pain. I rode up and inquired. " We are in peril," he answered. " What peril? we are not now in Albania, nor in the passes to Ephesus, Messalunghi, or Lepanto; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not courage to be thieves."—" True, Affendi, but nevertheless the shot is ringing in my ears."—" The shot! not a tophaike has been fired this morning."—" I hear it notwithstanding—Bom—Bom—as plainly as I hear your voice."—" Psha."—" As you please, Affendi; if it is written, so will it be."—I left this quick-eared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot, whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence. We all arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things, in more languages than spoiled

the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer. Romaic, Arnaout, Turkish, Italian, and English were all exercised, in various conceits, upon the unfortunate Mussulman. While we were contemplating the beautiful prospect, Dervish was occupied about the columns. I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if had become a "*Palao-castro*" man: "No," said he, "but these pillars will be useful in making a stand;" and added other remarks, which at least evinced his own belief in his troublesome faculty of *forehearing*. On our return to Athens, we heard from Leoné (a prisoner set ashore some days after) of the intended attack of the Mainotes, mentioned, with the cause of its not taking place, in the notes to Childe Harold, Canto 2d. I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that with other circumstances, we could not doubt of *his* having been in "villanous company," and ourselves in a bad neighbourhood. Dervish became a soothsayer for life, and I dare say is now hearing more musketry than ever will be fired, to the great refreshment of the Arnaouts of Berat, and his native mountains.—I shall mention one trait more of this singular race. In March 1811, a remarkably stout and active Arnaout came (I believe the fiftieth on the same errand) to offer himself as an attendant, which was declined: "Well, Affendi," quoth he, "may you live!—you would have found me useful. I shall leave the town for the hills to-morrow, in the winter I return, perhaps you will then receive me."—Dervish, who was present, remarked as a thing of course, and of no consequence, "in the mean time he will join the Klephtes," (robbers), which was true to the letter.—If not cut off, they come down in the winter, and pass it unmolested in some town, where they are often as well known as their exploits.

Note 41, page 201, line 10.

Looks not to priesthood for relief.

The monk's sermon is omitted. It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient, that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient to say, that it was of a customary length (as may be perceived from the interruptions

and uneasiness of the penitent), and was delivered in the nasal tone of all orthodox preachers.

Note 42, page 203, line 17.

And shining in her white symar.

" Symar"—Shroud.

Note 43, page 205, last line.

The circumstance to which the above story relates was not very uncommon in Turkey. A few years ago the wife of Muchtar Pacha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity; he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night! One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or showed a symptom of terror at so sudden a " wrench from all we know, from all we love." The fate of Phrosine, the fairest of this sacrifice, is the subject of many a Romaic and Arnaout ditty. The story in the text is one told of a young Venetian many years ago, and now nearly forgotten. I heard it by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story-tellers who abound in the Levant, and sing or recite their narratives. The additions and interpolations by the translator will be easily distinguished from the rest by the want of Eastern imagery; and I regret that my memory has retained so few fragments of the original.

For the contents of some of the notes I am indebted partly to D'Herbelot, and partly to that most Eastern, and, as Mr. Weber justly entitles it, " sublime tale," the " Caliph Vathek." I do not know from what source the author of that singular volume may have drawn his materials; some of his incidents are to be found in the " Bibliotheque Orientale;" but for correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even Rasselas must bow before it; his " Happy Valley" will not bear a comparison with the " Hall of Eblis."

THE CORSAIR,

A TALE.

" —— I suoi pensieri in lui dormir non ponno."
Tasso, Canto decimo, Gerusalemme Liberata.

TO

THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

MY DEAR MOORE,

I DEDICATE to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years; and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name, consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots; while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain repeats and ratifies the decree, permit one, whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble but sincere suffrage of friendship, to the voice of more than one nation. It will at least prove to you, that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society, nor abandoned the prospect of its renewal, whenever your leisure or inclination allows you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. It is said among those friends, I trust truly, that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East; none can do those scenes so

much justice. The wrongs of your own country, the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons, the beauty and feeling of her daughters, may there be found; and Collins, when he denominated his Oriental his Irish Eclogues, was not aware how true, at least, was a part of his parallel. Your imagination will create a warmer sun, and less clouded sky; but wildness, tenderness, and originality are part of your national claim of oriental descent, to which you have already thus far proved your title more clearly than the most zealous of your country's antiquarians.

May I add a few words on a subject on which all men are supposed to be fluent, and none agreeable? —Self. I have written much, and published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate; but for some years to come it is my intention to tempt no further the award of "Gods, men, nor columns." In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult, but, perhaps, the best adapted measure to our language, the good old and now neglected heroic couplet. The stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative; though, I confess, it is the measure most after my own heart: Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius: in blank verse, Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists, are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and barren rock on which they are kindled. The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure

certainly; but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion, I shall quit it without further apology, and take my chance once more with that versification, in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present, and will be of my future regret.

With regard to my story, and stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect and amiable, if possible, inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised, and considered no less responsible for their deeds and qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so—if I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of "drawing from self," the pictures are probably like, since they are unfavourable; and if not, those who know me are undeceived, and those who do not, I have little interest in undeceiving. I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining; but I cannot help a little surprise, and perhaps amusement, at some odd critical exceptions in the present instance, when I see several bards (far more deserving, I allow) in very reputable plight, and quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes, who, nevertheless, might be found with little more morality than "The Giaour," and perhaps—but no—I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage; and as to his identity, those who like it must give him whatever "alias" they please.

If, however, it were worth while to remove the impression, it might be of some service to me, that the man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends, the poet of all circles, and the idol of his own, permits me here and elsewhere to subscribe myself,

most truly,
and affectionately,
his obedient servant,
BYRON.

January 2, 1814.

THE CORSAIR.

CANTO I.

" ——— nessun maggior dolore,
" Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
" Nella miseria, ———————"

Dante.

I.

" O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
" Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
" Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
" Survey our empire, and behold our home!
" These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
" Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
" Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
" From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
" Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave!
" Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave;
" Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease!
" Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot please—
" Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,
" And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,

" The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,
" That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?
" That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
" And turn what some deem danger to delight;
" That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,
" And where the feebler faint—can only feel—
" Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,
" Its hope awaken and its spirit soar?
" No dread of death—if with us die our foes—
" Save that it seems even duller than repose:
" Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—
" When lost—what wrecks it—by disease or strife?
" Let him who crawls enamour'd of decay
" Cling to his couch, and sicken years away;
" Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head;
" Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
" While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
" Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control.
" His corse may boast its urn and narrow cave,
" And they who loath'd his life may gild his grave:
" Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,
" When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.
" For us, even banquets fond regret supply
" In the red cup that crowns our memory;
" And the brief epitaph in danger's day,
" When those who win at length divide the prey,
" And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,
" How had the brave who fell exulted *now!*"

II.

Such were the notes that from the Pirate's isle
Around the kindling watch-fire rang the while;

Such were the sounds that thrill'd the rocks along,
And unto ears as rugged seem'd a song!
In scatter'd groups upon the golden sand,
They game—carouse—converse—or whet the brand;
Select the arms—to each his blade assign,
And careless eye the blood that dims its shine:
Repair the boat, replace the helm or oar,
While others straggling muse along the shore;
For the wild bird the busy springes set,
Or spread beneath the sun the dripping net;
Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
With all the thirsting eye of Enterprise;
Tell o'er the tales of many a night of toil,
And marvel where they next shall seize a spoil:
No matter where—their chief's allotment this;
Theirs, to believe no prey nor plan amiss.
But who that CHIEF? his name on every shore
Is famed and fear'd—they ask and know no more.
With these he mingles not but to command;
Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
But they forgive his silence for success.
Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill,
That goblet passes him untasted still—
And for his fare—the rudest of his crew
Would that, in turn, have pass'd untasted too;
Earth's coarsest bread, the garden's homeliest roots,
And scarce the summer luxury of fruits,
His short repast in humbleness supply
With all a hermit's board would scarce deny.
But while he shuns the grosser joys of sense,
His mind seems nourish'd by that abstinence.

"Steer to that shore!"—they sail. "Do this!"—'tis done:
"Now form and follow me!"—the spoil is won.
Thus prompt his accents and his actions still,
And all obey and few inquire his will;
To such, brief answer and contemptuous eye
Convey reproof, nor further deign reply.

III.

"A sail!—a sail!"—a promised prize to Hope!
Her nation—flag—how speaks the telescope?
No prize, alas!—but yet a welcome sail:
The blood-red signal glitters in the gale.
Yes—she is ours—a home returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze!—she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the cape—our bay
Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray.
How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
Her white wings flying—never from her foes—
She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife.
Who would not brave the battle-fire—the wreck—
To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

IV.

Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings;
The sails are furl'd; and anchoring round she swings:
And gathering loiterers on the land discern
Her boat descending from the latticed stern.
'Tis mann'd—the oars keep concert to the strand,
Till grates her keel upon the shallow sand.

Hail to the welcome shout!—the friendly speech!
When hand grasps hand uniting on the beach:
The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity!

V.

The tidings spread, and gathering grows the crowd:
The hum of voices, and the laughter loud,
And woman's gentler anxious tone is heard—
Friends'—husbands'—lovers' names in each dear word:
"Oh! are they safe? we ask not of success—
"But shall we see them? will their accents bless?
"From where the battle roars—the billows chafe—
"They doubtless boldly did—but who are safe?
"Here let them haste to gladden and surprise,
"And kiss the doubt from these delighted eyes!"

VI.

"Where is our chief? for him we bear report—
"And doubt that joy—which hails our coming—short?
"Yet thus sincere—'tis cheering, though so brief;
"But, Juan! instant guide us to our chief:
"Our greeting paid, we'll feast on our return,
"And all shall hear what each may wish to learn."
Ascending slowly by the rock-hewn way,
To where his watch-tower beetles o'er the bay,
By bushy brake, and wild flowers blossoming,
And freshness breathing from each silver spring,
Whose scatter'd streams from granite basins burst,
Leap into life, and sparkling woo your thirst;
From crag to cliff they mount—Near yonder cave,
What lonely straggler looks along the wave?

In pensive posture leaning on the brand,
Not oft a resting-staff to that red hand?
"'Tis he—'tis Conrad—here—as wont—alone;
"On—Juan! on—and make our purpose known.
"The bark he views—and tell him we would greet
"His ear with tidings he must quickly meet:
"We dare not yet approach—thou know'st his mood,
"When strange or uninvited steps intrude."

VII.

Him Juan sought, and told of their intent—
He spake not—but a sign express'd assent.
These Juan calls—they come—to their salute
He bends him slightly, but his lips are mute.
"These letters, Chief, are from the Greek—the spy,
"Who still proclaims our spoil or peril nigh:
"Whate'er his tidings, we can well report,
"Much that"—"Peace, peace!"—he cuts their prating short.
Wondering they turn, abash'd, while each to each
Conjecture whispers in his muttering speech:
They watch his glance with many a stealing look,
To gather how that eye the tidings took;
But, this as if he guess'd, with head aside,
Perchance from some emotion, doubt, or pride,
He read the scroll—"My tablets, Juan, hark—
"Where is Gonsalvo?"
"In the anchor'd bark."
"There let him stay—to him this order bear.
"Back to your duty—for my course prepare:
"Myself this enterprise to-night will share."

"To-night, Lord Conrad?"
"Ay! at set of sun:
"The breeze will freshen when the day is done.
"My corslet—cloak—one hour—and we are gone.
"Sling on thy bugle—see that free from rust
"My carbine-lock springs worthy of my trust;
"Be the edge sharpen'd of my boarding-brand,
"And give its guard more room to fit my hand.
"This let the Armourer with speed dispose;
"Last time, it more fatigued my arm than foes:
"Mark that the signal-gun be duly fired,
"To tell us when the hour of stay 's expired."

VIII.

They make obeisance, and retire in haste,
Too soon to seek again the watery waste:
Yet they repine not—so that Conrad guides,
And who dare question aught that he decides?
That man of loneliness and mystery,
Scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh;
Whose name appals the fiercest of his crew,
And tints each swarthy cheek with sallower hue;
Still sways their souls with that commanding art
That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart.
What is that spell, that thus his lawless train
Confess and envy, yet oppose in vain?
What should it be, that thus their faith can bind?
The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind!
Link'd with success, assumed and kept with skill,
That moulds another's weakness to its will;
Wields with their hands, but, still to these unknown,
Makes even their mightiest deeds appear his own.

Such hath it been—shall be—beneath the sun
The many still must labour for the one!
'Tis Nature's doom—but let the wretch who toils,
Accuse not, hate not *him* who wears the spoils.
Oh! if he knew the weight of splendid chains,
How light the balance of his humbler pains!

IX.

Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,
Demons in act, but Gods at least in face,
In Conrad's form seems little to admire,
Though his dark eyebrow shades a glance of fire:
Robust but not Herculean—to the sight
No giant frame sets forth his common height;
Yet, in the whole, who paused to look again,
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar men;
They gaze and marvel how—and still confess
That thus it is, but why they cannot guess.
Sun-burnt his cheek, his forehead high and pale
The sable curls in wild profusion veil;
And oft perforce his rising lip reveals
The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce conceals.
Though smooth his voice, and calm his general mien,
Still seems there something he would not have seen:
His features' deepening lines and varying hue
At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view,
As if within that murkiness of mind
Work'd feelings fearful, and yet undefined;
Such might it be—that none could truly tell—
Too close inquiry his stern glance would quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
The full encounter of his searching eye:

He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek,
At once the observer's purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny,
Lest he to Conrad rather should betray
Some secret thought, than drag that chief's to day.
There was a laughing Devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled—and Mercy sigh'd farewell!

x.

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within—within—'twas there the spirit wrought!
Love shows all changes—Hate, Ambition, Guile,
Betray no further than the bitter smile;
The lip's least curl, the lightest paleness thrown
Along the govern'd aspect, speak alone
Of deeper passions; and to judge their mien,
He, who would see, must be himself unseen.
Then—with the hurried tread, the upward eye,
The clenched hand, the pause of agony,
That listens, starting, lest the step too near
Approach intrusive on that mood of fear:
Then—with each feature working from the heart,
With feelings loosed to strengthen—not depart:
That rise—convulse—contend—that freeze, or glow,
Flush in the cheek, or damp upon the brow;
Then—Stranger! if thou canst, and tremblest not,
Behold his soul—the rest that soothes his lot!
Mark—how that lone and blighted bosom sears
The scathing thought of execrated years!

Behold—but who hath seen, or e'er shall see,
Man as himself—the secret spirit free?

XI.

Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent
To lead the guilty—guilt's worst instrument—
His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven
Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.
Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school,
In words too wise, in conduct *there* a fool;
Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,
Doom'd by his very virtues for a dupe,
He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,
And not the traitors who betray'd him still;
Nor deem'd that gifts bestow'd on better men
Had left him joy, and means to give again.
Fear'd—shunn'd—belied—ere youth had lost her force,
He hated man too much to feel remorse,
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.
He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd
The rest no better than the thing he seem'd;
And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid
Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.
He knew himself detested, but he knew
The hearts that loath'd him, crouch'd and dreaded too.
Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt
From all affection and from all contempt:
His name could sadden, and his acts surprise;
But they that fear'd him dared not to despise:
Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake
The slumbering venom of the folded snake:

The first may turn—but not avenge the blow;
The last expires—but leaves no living foe;
Fast to the doom'd offender's form it clings,
And he may crush—not conquer—still it stings!

XII.

None are all evil—quickening round his heart,
One softer feeling would not yet depart;
Oft could he sneer at others as beguiled
By passions worthy of a fool or child;
Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
And even in him it asks the name of Love!
Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged,
Felt but for one from whom he never ranged;
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by;
Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd bower,
None ever soothed his most unguarded hour.
Yes—it was Love—if thoughts of tenderness,
Tried in temptation, strengthened by distress,
Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
And yet—Oh more than all!—untired by time;
Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,
Could render sullen were she near to smile,
Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent
On her one murmur of his discontent;
Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,
Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart;
Which nought removed, nor menaced to remove—
If there be love in mortals—this was love!
He was a villain—ay—reproaches shower
On him—but not the passion, nor its power,

Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!

XIII.

He paused a moment—till his hastening men
Pass'd the first winding downward to the glen.
" Strange tidings!—many a peril have I past,
" Nor know I why this next appears the last!
" Yet so my heart forebodes, but must not fear,
" Nor shall my followers find me falter here.
" 'Tis rash to meet, but surer death to wait
" Till here they hunt us to undoubted fate;
" And, if my plan but hold, and Fortune smile,
" We'll furnish mourners for our funeral-pile.
" Ay—let them slumber—peaceful be their dreams!
" Morn ne'er awoke them with such brilliant beams
" As kindle high to-night (but blow, thou breeze!)
" To warm these slow avengers of the seas.
" Now to Medora—Oh! my sinking heart,
" Long may her own be lighter than thou art!
" Yet was I brave—mean boast where all are brave!
" Ev'n insects sting for aught they seek to save.
" This common courage which with brutes we share,
" That owes its deadliest efforts to despair,
" Small merit claims—but 'twas my nobler hope
" To teach my few with numbers still to cope;
" Long have I led them—not to vainly bleed:
" No medium now—we perish or succeed!
" So let it be—it irks not me to die;
" But thus to urge them whence they cannot fly.
" My lot hath long had little of my care,
" But chafes my pride thus baffled in the snare:

" Is this my skill? my craft? to set at last
" Hope, power, and life upon a single cast?
" Oh, Fate!—accuse thy folly, not thy fate—
" She may redeem thee still—nor yet too late."

XIV.

Thus with himself communion held he, till
He reach'd the summit of his tower-crown'd hill:
There at the portal paused—for wild and soft
He heard those accents never heard too oft;
Through the high lattice far yet sweet they rung,
And these the notes his bird of beauty sung:

1.

" Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.

2.

" There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp
Burns the slow flame, eternal—but unseen;
Which not the darkness of despair can damp,
Though vain its ray as it had never been.

3.

" Remember me—Oh! pass not thou my grave
Without one thought whose relics there recline·
The only pang my bosom dare not brave
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

4.

" My fondest—faintest—latest accents hear—
Grief for the dead not Virtue can reprove;
Then give me all I ever ask'd—a tear,
The first—last—sole reward of so much love!"

He pass'd the portal—cross'd the corridore,
And reach'd the chamber as the strain gave o'er:
" My own Medora! sure thy song is sad—"

" In Conrad's absence wouldst thou have it glad?
" Without thine ear to listen to my lay,
" Still must my song my thoughts, my soul betray:
" Still must each accent to my bosom suit,
" My heart unhush'd—although my lips were mute!
" Oh! many a night on this lone couch reclined,
" My dreaming fear with storms hath wing'd the wind,
" And deem'd the breath that faintly fann'd thy sail
" The murmuring prelude of the ruder gale;
" Though soft, it seem'd the low prophetic dirge,
" That mourn'd thee floating on the savage surge:
" Still would I rise to rouse the beacon fire,
" Lest spies less true should let the blaze expire;
" And many a restless hour outwatch'd each star,
" And morning came—and still thou wert afar.
" Oh! how the chill blast on my bosom blew,
" And day broke dreary on my troubled view,
" And still I gazed and gazed—and not a prow
" Was granted to my tears—my truth—my vow!
" At length—'twas noon—I hail'd and blest the mast
" That met my sight—it near'd—Alas! it past!
" Another came—Oh God! 'twas thine at last!

" Would that those days were over! wilt thou ne'er,
" My Conrad! learn the joys of peace to share?
" Sure thou hast more than wealth, and many a home
" As bright as this invites us not to roam:
" Thou know'st it is not peril that I fear,
" I only tremble when thou art not here;
" Then not for mine, but that far dearer life,
" Which flies from love and languishes for strife—
" How strange that heart, to me so tender still,
" Should war with nature and its better will!"

" Yea, strange indeed—that heart hath long been changed;
" Worm-like 'twas trampled—adder-like avenged,
" Without one hope on earth beyond thy love,
" And scarce a glimpse of mercy from above.
" Yet the same feeling which thou dost condemn,
" My very love to thee is hate to them,
" So closely mingling here, that disentwined,
" I cease to love thee when I love mankind:
" Yet dread not this—the proof of all the past
" Assures the future that my love will last;
" But—Oh, Medora! nerve thy gentler heart,
" This hour again—but not for long—we part."

" This hour we part!—my heart foreboded this:
" Thus ever fade my fairy dreams of bliss.
" This hour—it cannot be—this hour away!
" Yon bark hath hardly anchor'd in the bay:
" Her consort still is absent, and her crew
" Have need of rest before they toil anew:

" My love! thou mock'st my weakness; and wouldst steel
" My breast before the time when it must feel;
" But trifle now no more with my distress,
" Such mirth hath less of play than bitterness.
" Be silent, Conrad!—dearest! come and share
" The feast these hands delighted to prepare;
" Light toil! to cull and dress thy frugal fare!
" See, I have pluck'd the fruit that promised best,
" And where not sure, perplex'd, but pleased, I guess'd
" At such as seem'd the fairest: thrice the hill
" My steps have wound to try the coolest rill;
" Yes! thy sherbet to-night will sweetly flow,
" See how it sparkles in its vase of snow!
" The grapes' gay juice thy bosom never cheers;
" Thou more than Moslem when the cup appears:
" Think not I mean to chide—for I rejoice
" What others deem a penance is thy choice.
" But come, the board is spread; our silver lamp
" Is trimm'd, and heeds not the Sirocco's damp:
" Then shall my handmaids while the time along,
" And join with me the dance, or wake the song;
" Or my guitar, which still thou lov'st to hear,
" Shall soothe or lull—or, should it vex thine ear,
" We 'll turn the tale, by Ariosto told,
" Of fair Olympia loved and left of old. (1)
" Why—thou wert worse than he who broke his vow
" To that lost damsel, shouldst thou leave me now;
" Or even that traitor chief—I 've seen thee smile,
" When the clear sky show'd Ariadne's Isle,
" Which I have pointed from these cliffs the while:

" And thus half sportive, half in fear, I said,
" Lest Time should raise that doubt to more than dread,
" Thus Conrad, too, will quit me for the main:
" And he deceived me—for—he came again!"

" Again—again—and oft again—my love!
" If there be life below, and hope above,
" He will return—but now, the moments bring
" The time of parting with redoubled wing:
" The why—the where—what boots it now to tell?
" Since all must end in that wild world—farewell!
" Yet would I fain—did time allow—disclose—
" Fear not—these are no formidable foes;
" And here shall watch a more than wonted guard,
" For sudden siege and long defence prepared:
" Nor be thou lonely—though thy lord's away,
" Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee stay;
" And this thy comfort—that, when next we meet,
" Security shall make repose more sweet.
" List!—'tis the bugle—Juan shrilly blew—
" One kiss—one more—another—Oh! Adieu!'

She rose—she sprung—she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
Which downcast droop'd in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o'er his arms,
In all the wildness of dishevell'd charms;
Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full—*that* feeling seem'd almost unfelt!
Hark—peals the thunder of the signal-gun!
It told 'twas sunset—and he cursed that sun.

Again—again—that form he madly press'd,
Which mutely clasp'd, imploringly caress'd!
And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed—as if to gaze no more;
Felt—that for him earth held but her alone,
Kiss'd her cold forehead—turn'd—is Conrad gone?

XV.

"And is he gone?"—on sudden solitude
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
"'Twas but an instant past—and here he stood!
"And now"—without the portal's porch she rush'd,
And then at length her tears in freedom gush'd;
Big—bright—and fast, unknown to her they fell;
But still her lips refused to send—"Farewell!"
For in that word—that fatal word—howe'er
We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair.
O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fix'd what time can ne'er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye
Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy,
Till—Oh, how far!—it caught a glimpse of him,
And then it flow'd—and phrensied seem to swim
Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dew'd
With drops of sadness oft to be renew'd.
"He 's gone!"—against her heart that hand is driven,
Convulsed and quick—then gently raised to heaven;
She look'd and saw the heaving of the main;
The white sail set—she dared not look again;
But turn'd with sickening soul within the gate—
"It is no dream—and I am desolate!"

XVI.

From crag to crag descending—swiftly sped
Stern Conrad down, nor once he turn'd his head;
But shrunk whene'er the windings of his way
Forced on his eye what he would not survey,
His lone, but lovely dwelling on the steep,
That hail'd him first when homeward from the deep:
And she—the dim and melancholy star,
Whose ray of beauty reached him from afar,
On her he must not gaze, he must not think,
There he might rest—but on Destruction's brink:
Yet once almost he stopp'd—and nearly gave
His fate to chance, his projects to the wave;
But no—it must not be—a worthy chief
May melt, but not betray to woman's grief.
He sees his bark, he notes how fair the wind,
And sternly gathers all his might of mind:
Again he hurries on—and as he hears
The clang of tumult vibrate on his ears,
The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,
The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar;
As marks his eye the seaboy on the mast,
The anchors rise, the sails unfurling fast,
The waving kerchiefs of the crowd that urge
That mute adieu to those who stem the surge;
And more than all, his blood-red flag aloft,
He marvell'd how his heart could seem so soft.
Fire in his glance, and wildness in his breast,
He feels of all his former self possest;
He bounds—he flies—until his footsteps reach
The verge where ends the cliff, begins the beach,

There checks his speed; but pauses less to breathe
The breezy freshness of the deep beneath,
Than there his wonted statelier step renew;
Nor rush, disturb'd by haste, to vulgar view:
For well had Conrad learn'd to curb the crowd,
By arts that veil, and oft preserve the proud;
His was the lofty port, the distant mien,
That seems to shun the sight—and awes if seen:
The solemn aspect, and the high-born eye,
That checks low mirth, but lacks not courtesy;
All these he wielded to command assent:
But where he wish'd to win, so well unbent,
That kindness cancell'd fear in those who heard,
And other's gifts show'd mean beside his word,
When echo'd to the heart as from his own
His deep yet tender melody of tone:
But such was foreign to his wonted mood,
He cared not what he soften'd, but subdued;
The evil passions of his youth had made
Him value less who loved—than what obey'd.

XVII.

Around him mustering ranged his ready guard.
Before him Juan stands—" Are all prepared?"

" They are—nay more—embark'd: the latest boat
" Waits but my chief——"
" My sword, and my capote.'
Soon firmly girded on, and lightly slung,
His belt and cloak were o'er his shoulders flung:
" Call Pedro here!" He comes—and Conrad bends,
With all the courtesy he deign'd his friends;

" Receive these tablets, and peruse with care,
" Words of high trust and truth are graven there;
" Double the guard, and when Anselmo's bark
" Arrives, let him alike these orders mark:
" In three days (serve the breeze) the sun shall shine
" On our return—till then all peace be thine!"
This said, his brother Pirate's hand he wrung,
Then to his boat with haughty gesture sprung.
Flash'd the dipt oars, and sparkling with the stroke,
Around the waves' phosphoric (2) brightness broke;
They gain the vessel—on the deck he stands,
Shrieks the shrill whistle—ply the busy hands—
He marks how well the ship her helm obeys,
How gallant all her crew—and deigns to praise.
His eyes of pride to young Gonsalvo turn—
Why doth he start, and inly seem to mourn?
Alas! those eyes beheld his rocky tower,
And live a moment o'er the parting hour;
She—his Medora—did she mark the prow?
Ah! never loved he half so much as now!
But much must yet be done ere dawn of day—
Again he mans himself and turns away;
Down to the cabin with Gonsalvo bends,
And there unfolds his plan—his means—and ends;
Before them burns the lamp, and spreads the chart,
And all that speaks and aids the naval art;
They to the midnight watch protract debate;
To anxious eyes what hour is ever late?
Meantime, the steady breeze serenely blew,
And fast and falcon-like the vessel flew;
Pass'd the high headlands of each clustering isle
To gain their port—long—long ere morning smile:

And soon the night-glass through the narrow bay
Discovers where the Pacha's galleys lay.
Count they each sail—and mark how there supine
The lights in vain o'er heedless Moslem shine.
Secure, unnoted, Conrad's prow pass'd by,
And anchor'd where his ambush meant to lie;
Screen'd from espial by the jutting cape,
That rears on high its rude fantastic shape.
Then rose his band to duty—not from sleep—
Equipp'd for deeds alike on land or deep;
While lean'd their leader o'er the fretting flood,
And calmly talk'd—and yet he talk'd of blood!

THE CORSAIR.

CANTO II.

" Conosceste i dubiosi desiri?"

Dante.

I.

In Coron's bay floats many a galley light,
Through Coron's lattices the lamps are bright,
For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-night:
A feast for promised triumph yet to come,
When he shall drag the fetter'd Rovers home;
This hath he sworn by Alla and his sword,
And faithful to his firman and his word,
His summon'd prows collect along the coast,
And great the gathering crews, and loud the boast;
Already shared the captives and the prize,
Though far the distant foe they thus despise;
'Tis but to sail—no doubt to-morrow's Sun
Will see the Pirates bound—their haven won!
Meantime the watch may slumber, if they will,
Nor only wake to war, but dreaming kill.

Though all, who can, disperse on shore and seek
To flesh their glowing valour on the Greek;
How well such deed becomes the turban'd brave—
To bare the sabre's edge before a slave!
Infest his dwelling—but forbear to slay,
Their arms are strong, yet merciful to-day,
And do not deign to smite because they may!
Unless some gay caprice suggests the blow,
To keep in practice for the coming foe.
Revel and rout the evening hours beguile,
And they who wish to wear a head must smile;
For Moslem mouths produce their choicest cheer,
And hoard their curses, till the coast is clear.

II.

High in his hall reclines the turban'd Seyd;
Around—the bearded chiefs he came to lead.
Removed the banquet, and the last pilaff—
Forbidden draughts, 'tis said, he dared to quaff,
Though to the rest the sober berry's juice,[3]
The slaves bear round for rigid Moslems' use;
The long Chibouque's[4] dissolving cloud supply,
While dance the Almas[5] to wild minstrelsy.
The rising morn will view the chiefs embark;
But waves are somewhat treacherous in the dark:
And revellers may more securely sleep
On silken couch than o'er the rugged deep;
Feast there who can—nor combat till they must,
And less to conquest than to Korans trust;
And yet the numbers crowded in his host
Might warrant more than even the Pacha's boast.

III.

With cautious reverence from the outer gate
Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to wait,
Bows his bent head—his hand salutes the floor,
Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore:
"A captive Dervise, from the pirate's nest
"Escaped, is here—himself would tell the rest."
He took the sign from Seyd's assenting eye,
And led the holy man in silence nigh.
His arms were folded on his dark-green vest,
His step was feeble, and his look deprest;
Yet worn he seem'd of hardship more than years,
And pale his cheek with penance, not from fears.
Vow'd to his God—his sable locks he wore,
And these his lofty cap rose proudly o'er:
Around his form his loose long robe was thrown,
And wrapt a breast bestow'd on heaven alone;
Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd,
He calmly met the curious eyes that scann'd;
And question of his coming fain would seek,
Before the Pacha's will allow'd to speak.

IV.

"Whence com'st thou, Dervise?"
"From the outlaw's den,
"A fugitive—"
"Thy capture where and when?"
"From Scalanovo's port to Scio's isle,
"The Saick was bound; but Alla did not smile
"Upon our course—the Moslem merchant's gains
"The Rovers won: our limbs have worn their chains.

"I had no death to fear, nor wealth to boast,
"Beyond the wandering freedom which I lost;
"At length a fisher's humble boat by night
"Afforded hope, and offer'd chance of flight:
"I seized the hour, and find my safety here—
"With thee—most mighty Pacha! who can fear?"

"How speed the outlaws? stand they well prepared,
"Their plunder'd wealth, and robber's rock, to guard?
"Dream they of this our preparation, doom'd
"To view with fire their scorpion nest consumed?"

"Pacha! the fetter'd captive's mourning eye
"That weeps for flight, but ill can play the spy;
"I only heard the reckless waters roar,
"Those waves that would not bear me from the shore;
"I only mark'd the glorious sun and sky,
"Too bright—too blue—for my captivity;
"And felt—that all which Freedom's bosom cheers,
"Must break my chain before it dried my tears.
"This may'st thou judge, at least, from my escape,
"They little deem of aught in peril's shape;
"Else vainly had I pray'd or sought the chance
"That leads me here—if eyed with vigilance:
"The careless guard that did not see me fly,
"May watch as idly when thy power is nigh:
"Pacha!—my limbs are faint—and nature craves
"Food for my hunger, rest from tossing waves:
"Permit my absence—peace be with thee! Peace
"With all around!—now grant repose—release."

" Stay, Dervise! I have more to question—stay,
" I do command thee—sit—dost hear?—obey!
" More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring;
" Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting:
" The supper done—prepare thee to reply,
" Clearly and full—I love not mystery."

'Twere vain to guess what shook the pious man,
Who look'd not lovingly on that Divan;
Nor show'd high relish for the banquet prest,
And less respect for every fellow guest.
'Twas but a moment's peevish hectic past
Along his cheek, and tranquillized as fast:
He sate him down in silence, and his look
Resumed the calmness which before forsook:
The feast was usher'd in—but sumptuous fare
He shunn'd as if some poison mingled there.
For one so long condemn'd to toil and fast,
Methinks he strangely spares the rich repast.
" What ails thee, Dervise? eat—dost thou suppose
" This feast a Christian's? or my friends thy foes?
" Why dost thou shun the salt? that sacred pledge,
" Which, once partaken, blunts the sabre's edge,
" Makes even contending tribes in peace unite,
" And hated hosts seem brethren to the sight!"

" Salt seasons dainties—and my food is still
" The humblest root, my drink the simplest rill;
" And my stern vow and order's [6] laws oppose
" To break or mingle bread with friends or foes;
" It may seem strange—if there be aught to dread,
" That peril rests upon my single head;

" But for thy sway—nay more—thy Sultan's throne,
" I taste nor bread nor banquet—save alone;
" Infringed our order's rule, the Prophet's rage
" To Mecca's dome might bar my pilgrimage."

" Well—as thou wilt—ascetic as thou art—
" One question answer; then in peace depart.
" How many?—Ha! it cannot sure be day?
" What star—what sun is bursting on the bay?
" It shines a lake of fire!—away—away!
" Ho! treachery! my guards! my scimitar!
" The galleys feed the flames—and I afar!
" Accursed Dervise!—these thy tidings—thou
" Some villain spy--seize--cleave him--slay him now!"

Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,
Nor less his change of form appall'd the sight:
Up rose that dervise—not in saintly garb,
But like a warrior bounding on his barb,
Dash'd his high cap, and tore his robe away—
Shone his mail'd breast, and flash'd his sabre's ray!
His close but glittering casque, and sable plume,
More glittering eye, and black brow's sabler gloom,
Glared on the Moslems' eyes some Afrit sprite,
Whose demon death-blow left no hope for fight.
The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
Of flames on high, and torches from below;
The shriek of terror, and the mingling yell—
For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell,
Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of hell!
Distracted, to and fro, the flying slaves
Behold but bloody shore and fiery waves;

Nought heeded they the Pacha's angry cry,
They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai![7]
He saw their terror—check'd the first despair
That urged him but to stand and perish there,
Since far too early and too well obey'd,
The flame was kindled ere the signal made;
He saw their terror—from his baldric drew
His bugle—brief the blast—but shrilly blew:
'Tis answer'd—"Well ye speed, my gallant crew!
"Why did I doubt their quickness of career?
"And deem design had left me single here?"
Sweeps his long arm—that sabre's whirling sway
Sheds fast atonement for its first delay;
Completes his fury, what their fear begun,
And makes the many basely quail to one.
The cloven turbans o'er the chamber spread,
And scarce an arm dare rise to guard its head:
Even Seyd, convulsed, o'erwhelm'd with rage, surprise,
Retreats before him, though he still defies.
No craven he—and yet he dreads the blow,
So much Confusion magnifies his foe!
His blazing galleys still distract his sight,
He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight;[8]
For now the pirates pass'd the Haram gate,
And burst within—and it were death to wait;
Where wild Amazement shrieking—kneeling—throws
The sword aside—in vain—the blood o'erflows!
The Corsairs pouring, haste to where within,
Invited Conrad's bugle, and the din
Of groaning victims, and wild cries for life,
Proclaim'd how well he did the work of strife.

They shout to find him grim and lonely there,
A glutted tiger mangling in his lair!
But short their greeting—shorter his reply—
" 'Tis well—but Seyd escapes—and he must die—
" Much hath been done—but more remains to do—
" Their galleys blaze—why not their city too?"

v.

Quick at the word—they seized him each a torch,
And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
A stern delight was fix'd in Conrad's eye,
But sudden sunk—for on his ear the cry
Of women struck, and like a deadly knell
Knock'd at that heart unmoved by battle's yell.
" Oh! burst the Haram—wrong not on your lives
" One female form—remember—*we* have wives.
" On them such outrage Vengeance will repay;
" Man is our foe, and such 'tis ours to slay:
" But still we spared—must spare the weaker prey.
" Oh! I forgot—but Heaven will not forgive
" If at my word the helpless cease to live;
" Follow who will—I go—we yet have time
" Our souls to lighten of at least a crime."
He climbs the crackling stair—he bursts the door,
Nor feels his feet glow scorching with the floor;
His breath choked gasping with the volumed smoke,
But still from room to room his way he broke.
They search—they find—they save: with lusty arms
Each bears a prize of unregarded charms;
Calm their loud fears; sustain their sinking frames
With all the care defenceless beauty claims:

So well could Conrad tame their fiercest mood,
And check the very hands with gore imbrued.
But who is she? whom Conrad's arms convey
From reeking pile and combat's wreck—away—
Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed?
The Haram queen—but still the slave of Seyd!

VI.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare,[9]
Few words to reassure the trembling fair;
For in that pause compassion snatch'd from war,
The foe before retiring, fast and far,
With wonder saw their footsteps unpursued,
First slowlier fled—then rallied—then withstood.
This Seyd perceives, then first perceives how few,
Compared with his, the Corsair's roving crew,
And blushes o'er his error, as he eyes
The ruin wrought by panic and surprise.
Alla il Alla! Vengeance swells the cry—
Shame mounts to rage that must atone or die!
And flame for flame and blood for blood must tell,
The tide of triumph ebbs that flow'd too well—
When wrath returns to renovated strife,
And those who fought for conquest strike for life.
Conrad beheld the danger—he beheld
His followers faint by freshening foes repell'd:
"One effort—one—to break the circling host!"
They form—unite—charge—waver—all is lost!
Within a narrower ring compress'd, beset,
Hopeless, not heartless, strive and struggle yet—
Ah! now they fight in firmest file no more,
Hemm'd in—cut off—cleft down—and trampled o'er;

But each strikes singly, silently, and home,
And sinks outwearied rather than o'ercome,
His last faint quittance rendering with his breath,
Till the blade glimmers in the grasp of death!

VII.

But first, ere came the rallying host to blows,
And rank to rank, and hand to hand oppose,
Gulnare and all her Haram handmaids freed,
Safe in the dome of one who held their creed,
By Conrad's mandate safely were bestow'd,
And dried those tears for life and fame that flow'd:
And when that dark-eyed lady, young Gulnare,
Recall'd those thoughts late wandering in despair,
Much did she marvel o'er the courtesy
That smooth'd his accents; soften'd in his eye:
'Twas strange—*that* robber thus with gore bedew'd,
Seem'd gentler then than Seyd in fondest mood.
The Pacha woo'd as if he deem'd the slave
Must seem delighted with the heart he gave;
The Corsair vow'd protection, soothed affright,
As if his homage were a woman's right.
"The wish is wrong—nay, worse for female—vain:
"Yet much I long to view that chief again;
"If but to thank for, what my fear forgot,
"The life—my loving lord remember'd not!"

VIII.

And him she saw, where thickest carnage spread,
But gather'd breathing from the happier dead;
Far from his band, and battling with a host
That deem right dearly won the field he lost,

Fell'd—bleeding—baffled of the death he sought,
And snatch'd to expiate all the ills he wrought;
Preserved to linger and to live in vain,
While Vengeance ponder'd o'er new plans of pain,
And stanch'd the blood she saves to shed again—
But drop by drop, for Seyd's unglutted eye
Would doom him ever dying—ne'er to die!
Can this be he? triumphant late she saw,
When his red hand's wild gesture waved, a law!
'Tis he indeed—disarm'd but undeprest,
His sole regret the life he still possest;
His wounds too slight, though taken with that will,
Which would have kiss'd the hand that then could kill.
Oh were there none, of all the many given,
To send his soul—he scarcely ask'd to heaven?
Must he alone of all retain his breath,
Who more than all had striven and struck for death?
He deeply felt—what mortal hearts must feel,
When thus reversed on faithless fortune's wheel,
For crimes committed, and the victor's threat
Of lingering tortures to repay the debt—
He deeply, darkly felt; but evil pride
That led to perpetrate—now serves to hide.
Still in his stern and self-collected mien
A conqueror's more than captive's air is seen,
Though faint with wasting toil and stiffening wound,
But few that saw—so calmly gazed around:
Though the far shouting of the distant crowd,
Their tremors o'er, rose insolently loud,
The better warriors who beheld him near,
Insulted not the foe who taught them fear;

And the grim guards that to his durance led,
In silence eyed him with a secret dread.

IX.

The Leech was sent—but not in mercy—there
To note how much the life yet left could bear;
He found enough to load with heaviest chain,
And promise feeling for the wrench of pain:
To-morrow—yea—to-morrow's evening sun
Will sinking see impalement's pangs begun,
And rising with the wonted blush of morn
Behold how well or ill those pangs are borne.
Of torments this the longest and the worst,
Which adds all other agony to thirst,
That day by day death still forbears to slake,
While famish'd vultures flit around the stake.
"Oh! water—water!"—smiling Hate denies
The victim's prayer—for if he drinks—he dies.
This was his doom:—the Leech, the guard were gone,
And left proud Conrad fetter'd and alone.

X.

'Twere vain to paint to what his feelings grew—
It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
When all its elements convulsed—combined—
Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
And gnashing with impenitent Remorse;
That juggling fiend—who never spake before—
But cries "I warn'd thee!" when the deed is o'er.
Vain voice! the spirit burning but unbent,
May writhe—rebel—the weak alone repent!

‡

Even in that lonely hour when most it feels,
And, to itself, all—all that self reveals,
No single passion, and no ruling thought
That leaves the rest as once unseen, unsought;
But the wild prospect when the soul reviews—
All rushing through their thousand avenues.
Ambition's dreams expiring, love's regret,
Endanger'd glory, life itself beset;
The joy untasted, the contempt or hate
'Gainst those who fain would triumph in our fate;
The hopeless past, the hasting future driven
Too quickly on to guess if hell or heaven;
Deeds, thoughts, and words, perhaps remember'd not
So keenly till that hour, but ne'er forgot;
Things light or lovely in their acted time,
But now to stern reflection each a crime;
The withering sense of evil unreveal'd,
Not cankering less because the more conceal'd—
All, in a word, from which all eyes must start,
That opening sepulchre—the naked heart
Bares with its buried woes, till Pride awake,
To snatch the mirror from the soul—and break.
Ay—Pride can veil, and Courage brave it all,
All—all—before—beyond—the deadliest fall.
Each hath some fear, and he who least betrays,
The only hypocrite deserving praise:
Not the loud recreant wretch who boasts and flies;
But he who looks on death—and silent dies.
So steel'd by pondering o'er his far career,
He half-way meets him should he menace near!

XI.

In the high chamber of his highest tower
Sate Conrad, fetter'd in the Pacha's power.
His palace perish'd in the flame—this fort
Contain'd at once his captive and his court.
Not much could Conrad of his sentence blame,
His foe, if vanquish'd, had but shared the same:—
Alone he sate—in solitude had scann'd
His guilty bosom, but that breast he mann'd:
One thought alone he could not—dared not meet—
"Oh, how these tidings will Medora greet!"
Then—only then—his clanking hands he raised,
And strain'd with rage the chain on which he gazed;
But soon he found—or feign'd—or dream'd relief,
And smiled in self-derision of his grief,
"And now come torture when it will—or may,
"More need of rest to nerve me for the day!"
This said, with languor to his mat he crept,
And whatsoe'er his visions, quickly slept.
'Twas hardly midnight when that fray begun,
For Conrad's plans matured, at once were done;
And Havoc loathes so much the waste of time,
She scarce had left an uncommitted crime.
One hour beheld him since the tide he stemm'd—
Disguised — discover'd — conquering — ta'en — condemn'd—
A chief on land—an outlaw on the deep—
Destroying—saving—prison'd—and asleep!

XII.

He slept in calmest seeming—for his breath
Was hush'd so deep—Ah! happy if in death!

He slept—Who o'er his placid slumber bends?
His foes are gone—and here he hath no friends;
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?
No, 'tis an earthly form with heavenly face!
Its white arm raised a lamp—yet gently hid,
Lest the ray flash abruptly on the lid
Of that closed eye, which opens but to pain,
And once unclosed—but once may close again.
That form, with eye so dark, and cheek so fair,
And auburn waves of gemm'd and braided hair;
With shape of fairy lightness—naked foot,
That shines like snow, and falls on earth as mute—
Through guards and dunnest night how came it there?
Ah! rather ask what will not woman dare?
Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gulnare!
She could not sleep—and while the Pacha's rest
In muttering dreams yet saw his pirate-guest,
She left his side—his signet-ring she bore,
Which oft in sport adorn'd her hand before—
And with it, scarcely question'd, won her way
Through drowsy guards that must that sign obey.
Worn out with toil, and tired with changing blows,
Their eyes had envied Conrad his repose;
And chill and nodding at the turret door,
They stretch their listless limbs, and watch no more:
Just raised their heads to hail the signet-ring,
Nor ask or what or who the sign may bring.

XIII.

She gazed in wonder, "Can he calmly sleep,
"While other eyes his fall or ravage weep?

"And mine in restlessness are wandering here—
"What sudden spell hath made this man so dear?
"True—'tis to him my life, and more, I owe,
"And me and mine he spared from worse than woe:
"'Tis late to think—but soft—his slumber breaks—
"How heavily he sighs!—he starts—awakes!"

He raised his head—and dazzled with the light,
His eye seem'd dubious if it saw aright:
He moved his hand—the grating of his chain
Too harshly told him that he lived again.
"What is that form? if not a shape of air,
"Methinks, my jailor's face shows wond'rous fair!"

"Pirate! thou know'st me not—but I am one,
"Grateful for deeds thou hast too rarely done;
"Look on me—and remember her, thy hand
"Snatch'd from the flames, and thy more fearful band.
"I come through darkness—and I scarce know why—
"Yet not to hurt—I would not see thee die."

"If so, kind lady! thine the only eye
"That would not here in that gay hope delight:
"Theirs is the chance—and let them use their right.
"But still I thank their courtesy or thine,
"That would confess me at so fair a shrine!"

Strange though it seem—yet with extremest grief
Is link'd a mirth—it doth not bring relief—
That playfulness of Sorrow ne'er beguiles,
And smiles in bitterness—but still it smiles;

And sometimes with the wisest and the best,
Till even the scaffold [10] echoes with their jest!
Yet not the joy to which it seems akin—
It may deceive all hearts, save that within.
Whate'er it was that flash'd on Conrad, now
A laughing wildness half unbent his brow:
And these his accents had a sound of mirth,
As if the last he could enjoy on earth;
Yet 'gainst his nature—for through that short life,
Few thoughts had he to spare from gloom and strife.

XIV.

"Corsair! thy doom is named—but I have power
"To soothe the Pacha in his weaker hour.
"Thee would I spare—nay more—would save thee now,
"But this—time—hope—nor even thy strength allow;
"But all I can, I will: at least delay
"The sentence that remits thee scarce a day.
"More now were ruin—even thyself were loth
"The vain attempt should bring but doom to both."

"Yes!—loth indeed:—my soul is nerved to all,
"Or fall'n too low to fear a further fall:
"Tempt not thyself with peril; me with hope
"Of flight from foes with whom I could not cope:
"Unfit to vanquish—shall I meanly fly,
"The one of all my band that would not die?
"Yet there is one—to whom my memory clings,
"Till to these eyes her own wild softness springs.
"My sole resources in the path I trod
"Were these—my bark—my sword—my love—my God!

" The last I left in youth—he leaves me now—
" And Man but works his will to lay me low.
" I have no thought to mock his throne with prayer
" Wrung from the coward crouching of despair;
" It is enough—I breathe—and I can bear.
" My sword is shaken from the worthless hand
" That might have better kept so true a brand;
" My bark is sunk or captive—but my love—
" For her in sooth my voice would mount above:
" Oh! she is all that still to earth can bind—
" And this will break a heart so more than kind,
" And blight a form—till thine appear'd, Gulnare!
" Mine eye ne'er ask'd if others were as fair."

" Thou lov'st another then?—but what to me
" Is this—'tis nothing—nothing e'er can be:
" But yet—thou lov'st—and—Oh! I envy those
" Whose hearts on hearts as faithful can repose,
" Who never feel the void—the wandering thought
" That sighs o'er visions—such as mine hath wrought."

" Lady—methought thy love was his, for whom
" This arm redeem'd thee from a fiery tomb."

" My love stern Seyd's! Oh—No—No—not my love—
" Yet much this heart, that strives no more, once strove
" To meet his passion—but it would not be.
" I felt—I feel—love dwells with—with the free.
" I am a slave, a favour'd slave at best,
" To share his splendour, and seem very blest!
" Oft must my soul the question undergo,
" Of—' Dost thou love?' and burn to answer ' No!'

" Oh! hard it is that fondness to sustain,
" And struggle not to feel averse in vain;
" But harder still the heart's recoil to bear,
" And hide from one—perhaps another there.
" He takes the hand I give not—nor withhold—
" Its pulse nor check'd—nor quicken'd—calmly cold:
" And when resign'd, it drops a lifeless weight
" From one I never loved enough to hate.
" No warmth these lips return by his imprest,
" And chill'd remembrance shudders o'er the rest.
" Yes—had I ever proved that passion's zeal,
" The change to hatred were at least to feel:
" But still—he goes unmourn'd—returns unsought—
" And oft when present—absent from my thought.
" Or when reflection comes, and come it must—
" I fear that henceforth 'twill but bring disgust;
" I am his slave—but, in despite of pride,
" 'Twere worse than bondage to become his bride.
" Oh! that this dotage of his breast would cease!
" Or seek another and give mine release,
" But yesterday—I could have said, to peace!
" Yes—if unwonted fondness now I feign,
" Remember—captive! 'tis to break thy chain;
" Repay the life that to thy hand I owe;
" To give thee back to all endear'd below,
" Who share such love as I can never know.
" Farewell—morn breaks—and I must now away:
" 'Twill cost me dear—but dread no death to-day!"

XV.

She press'd his fetter'd fingers to her heart,
And bow'd her head, and turn'd her to depart,

And noiseless as a lovely dream is gone.
And was she here? and is he now alone?
What gem hath dropp'd and sparkles o'er his chain?
The tear most sacred, shed for others' pain,
That starts at once—bright—pure—from Pity's mine,
Already polish'd by the hand divine!

Oh! too convincing—dangerously dear—
In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!
That weapon of her weakness she can wield,
To save, subdue—at once her spear and shield:
Avoid it—Virtue ebbs and Wisdom errs,
Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers!
What lost a world, and bade a hero fly?
The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye.
Yet be the soft triumvir's fault forgiven,
By this—how many lose not earth—but heaven!
Consign their souls to man's eternal foe,
And seal their own to spare some wanton's woe!

XVI.

'Tis morn—and o'er his alter'd features play
The beams—without the hope of yesterday.
What shall he be ere night? perchance a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing:
By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt,
While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
Chill—wet—and misty round each stiffen'd limb,
Refreshing earth—reviving all but him!—

THE CORSAIR.

CANTO III.

"Come vedi—ancor non m'abbandona."
Dante.

I.

Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills the setting sun;
Not, as in Northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light!
O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina's rock, and Idra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse
More deeply purpled meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course, and own the hues of heaven;
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When—Athens! here thy Wisest look'd his last.
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's [11] latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—
The precious hour of parting lingers still;
But sad his light to agonizing eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes:
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land, where Phœbus never frown'd before,
But ere he sank below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled;
The soul of him who scorn'd to fear or fly—
Who lived and died, as none can live or die!

But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign. [12]
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;
With cornice glimmering as the moon-beams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray,
And, bright around with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide
Where meek Cephisus pours his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk, [13]
And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues arrest the eye—
And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;
Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mixt with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile. (14)

II.

Not now my theme—why turn my thoughts to thee?
Oh! who can look along thy native sea,
Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the tale,
So much its magic must o'er all prevail?
Who that beheld that Sun upon thee set,
Fair Athens! could thine evening face forget?
Not he—whose heart nor time nor distance frees,
Spell-bound within the clustering Cyclades!
Nor seems this homage foreign to his strain,
His Corsair's isle was once thine own domain—
Would that with freedom it were thine again!

III.

The Sun hath sunk—and, darker than the night,
Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height
Medora's heart—the third day's come and gone—
With it he comes not—sends not—faithless one!
The wind was fair though light; and storms were none.
Last eve Anselmo's bark return'd, and yet
His only tidings that they had not met!
Though wild, as now, far different were the tale
Had Conrad waited for that single sail.

The night-breeze freshens—she that day had past
In watching all that Hope proclaim'd a mast;
Sadly she sate—on high—Impatience bore
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,
And there she wander'd heedless of the spray
That dash'd her garments oft, and warn'd away:
She saw not—felt not this—nor dared depart,
Nor deem'd it cold—her chill was at her heart;
Till grew such certainty from that suspense—
His very Sight had shock'd from life or sense!

It came at last—a sad and shatter'd boat,
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they sought;
Some bleeding—all most wretched—these the few—
Scarce knew they how escaped—*this* all they knew.
In silence, darkling, each appear'd to wait
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's fate:
Something they would have said; but seem'd to fear
To trust their accents to Medora's ear.
She saw at once, yet sunk not—trembled not—
Beneath that grief, that loneliness of lot,
Within that meek fair form, were feelings high,
That deem'd not till they found their energy.
While yet was Hope—they soften'd—flutter'd—wept--
All lost—that softness died not—but it slept;
And o'er its slumber rose that Strength which said,
"With nothing left to love—there 's nought to dread."
'Tis more than nature's; like the burning might
Delirium gathers from the fever's height.

"Silent you stand—nor would I hear you tell
"What—speak not—breathe not—for I know it well—

"Yet would I ask—almost my lip denies
"The—quick your answer—tell me where he lies."

"Lady! we know not—scarce with life we fled;
"But here is one denies that he is dead:
"He saw him bound; and bleeding—but alive."

She heard no further—'twas in vain to strive—
So throbb'd each vein—each thought—till then withstood;
Her own dark soul—these words at once subdued:
She totters—falls—and senseless had the wave
Perchance but snatch'd her from another grave;
But that with hands though rude, yet weeping eyes,
They yield such aid as Pity's haste supplies:
Dash o'er her deathlike cheek the ocean dew,
Raise—fan—sustain—till life returns anew;
Awake her handmaids, with the matrons leave
That fainting form o'er which they gaze and grieve;
Then seek Anselmo's cavern, to report
The tale too tedious—when the triumph short.

IV.

In that wild council words wax'd warm and strange,
With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and revenge;
All, save repose or flight: still lingering there
Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade despair;
Whate'er his fate—the breasts he form'd and led
Will save him living, or appease him dead.
Woe to his foes! there yet survive a few,
Whose deeds are daring, as their hearts are true.

V.

Within the Haram's secret chamber sate
Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his Captive's fate;
His thoughts on love and hate alternate dwell,
Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's cell;
Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined
Surveys his brow—would soothe his gloom of mind:
While many an anxious glance her large dark eye
Sends in its idle search for sympathy,
His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,[15]
But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

"Pacha! the day is thine; and on thy crest
"Sits Triumph—Conrad taken—fall'n the rest!
"His doom is fix'd—he dies: and well his fate
"Was earn'd—yet much too worthless for thy hate:
"Methinks, a short release, for ransom told
"With all his treasure, not unwisely sold;
"Report speaks largely of his pirate-hoard—
"Would that of this my Pacha were the lord!
"While baffled, weaken'd by this fatal fray—
"Watch'd—follow'd—he were then an easier prey;
"But once cut off—the remnant of his band
"Embark their wealth, and seek a safer strand."

"Gulnare!—if for each drop of blood a gem
"Were offer'd rich as Stamboul's diadem;
"If for each hair of his a massy mine
"Of virgin ore should supplicating shine;
"If all our Arab tales divulge or dream
"Of wealth were here—that gold should not redeem!
"It had not now redeem'd a single hour;
"But that I know him fetter'd, in my power;

" And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still
" On pangs that longest rack, and latest kill."

" Nay, Seyd!—I seek not to restrain thy rage,
" Too justly moved for mercy to assuage;
" My thoughts were only to secure for thee
" His riches—thus released, he were not free:
" Disabled, shorn of half his might and band,
" His capture could but wait thy first command."

" His capture *could!*—and shall I then resign
" One day to him—the wretch already mine?
" Release my foe!—at whose remonstrance?—thine!
" Fair suitor!—to thy virtuous gratitude,
" That thus repays this Giaour's relenting mood,
" Which thee and thine alone of all could spare,
" No doubt—regardless if the prize were fair,
" My thanks and praise alike are due—now hear!
" I have a counsel for thy gentler ear:
" I do mistrust thee, woman! and each word
" Of thine stamps truth on all Suspicion heard.
" Borne in his arms through fire from yon Serai—
" Say, wert thou lingering there with him to fly?
" Thou need'st not answer—thy confession speaks,
" Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks;
" Then, lovely dame, bethink thee! and beware:
" 'Tis not *his* life alone may claim such care!
" Another word and—nay—I need no more.
" Accursed was the moment when he bore
" Thee from the flames, which better far—but—no—
" I then had mourn'd thee with a lover's woe—

"Now 'tis thy lord that warns—deceitful thing!
"Know'st thou that I can clip thy wanton wing?
"In words alone I am not wont to chafe:
"Look to thyself—nor deem thy falsehood safe!"

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence withdrew,
Rage in his eye and threats in his adieu:
Ah! little reck'd that chief of womanhood—
Which frowns ne'er quell'd, nor menaces subdued;
And little deem'd he what thy heart, Gulnare!
When soft could feel, and when incensed could dare.
His doubts appear'd to wrong—nor yet she knew
How deep the root from whence compassion grew—
She was a slave—from such may captives claim
A fellow-feeling, differing but in name;
Still half unconscious—heedless of his wrath,
Again she ventured on the dangerous path,
Again his rage repell'd—until arose
That strife of thought, the source of woman's woes!

VI.

Meanwhile—long anxious—weary—still—the same
Roll'd day and night—his soul could terror tame—
This fearful interval of doubt and dread,
When every hour might doom him worse than dead,
When every step that echo'd by the gate,
Might entering lead where ax and stake await;
When every voice that grated on his ear
Might be the last that he could ever hear;
Could terror tame—that spirit stern and high
Had proved unwilling as unfit to die;

'Twas worn—perhaps decay'd—yet silent bore
That conflict deadlier far than all before:
The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to quail;
But bound and fix'd in fetter'd solitude,
To pine, the prey of every changing mood;
To gaze on thine own heart; and meditate
Irrevocable faults, and coming fate—
Too late the last to shun—the first to mend—
To count the hours that struggle to thine end,
With not a friend to animate, and tell
To other ears that death became thee well;
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie,
And blot life's latest scene with calumny;
Before thee tortures, which the soul can dare,
Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh may bear;
But deeply feels a single cry would shame,
To valour's praise thy last and dearest claim;
The life thou leav'st below, denied above
By kind monopolists of heavenly love;
And more than doubtful paradise—thy heaven
Of earthly hope—thy loved one from thee riven.
Such were the thoughts that outlaw must sustain,
And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:
And those sustain'd he—boots it well or ill?
Since not to sink beneath, is something still!

VII.

The first day pass'd—he saw not her—Gulnare—
The second—third—and still she came not there;
But what her words avouch'd, her charms had done,
Or else he had not seen another sun.

The fourth day roll'd along, and with the night
Came storm and darkness in their mingling might:
Oh! how he listen'd to the rushing deep,
That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep;
And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,
Roused by the roar of his own element!
Oft had he ridden on that winged wave,
And loved its roughness for the speed it gave;
And now its dashing echo'd on his ear,
A long known voice—alas! too vainly near!
Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly loud,
Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-cloud;
And flash'd the lightning by the latticed bar,
To him more genial than the midnight star:
Close to the glimmering grate he dragg'd his chain,
And hoped *that* peril might not prove in vain.
He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and pray'd
One pitying flash to mar the form it made:
His steel and impious prayer attract alike—
The storm roll'd onward, and disdain'd to strike;
Its peal wax'd fainter—ceased—he felt alone,
As if some faithless friend had spurn'd his groan!

VIII.

The midnight pass'd—and to the massy door
A light step came—it paused—it moved once more;
Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key:
'Tis as his heart foreboded—that fair she!
Whate'er her sins, to him a guardian saint,
And beauteous still as hermit's hope can paint;
Yet changed since last within that cell she came,
More pale her cheek, more tremulous her frame:

On him she cast her dark and hurried eye,
Which spoke before her accents—"thou must die!
"Yes, thou must die—there is but one resource,
"The last—the worst—if torture were not worse."

"Lady! I look to none—my lips proclaim
"What last proclaim'd they—Conrad still the same:
"Why should'st thou seek an outlaw's life to spare,
"And change the sentence I deserve to bear?
"Well have I earn'd—nor here alone—the meed
"Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless deed."

"Why should I seek? because—Oh! didst thou not
"Redeem my life from worse than slavery's lot?
"Why should I seek?—hath misery made thee blind
"To the fond workings of a woman's mind!
"And must I say? albeit my heart rebel
"With all that woman feels, but should not tell—
"Because—despite thy crimes—that heart is moved:
"It fear'd thee—thank'd thee—pitied—madden'd—
loved.
"Reply not, tell not now thy tale again,
"Thou lov'st another—and I love in vain;
"Though fond as mine her bosom, form more fair,
"I rush through peril which she would not dare.
"If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,
"Were I thine own—thou wert not lonely here:
"An outlaw's spouse—and leave her lord to roam!
"What hath such gentle dame to do with home?
"But speak not now—o'er thine and o'er my head
"Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread;

" If thou hast courage still, and would'st be free,
" Receive this poniard—rise—and follow me!"

" Ay—in my chains! my steps will gently tread,
" With these adornments, o'er each slumbering head!
" Thou hast forgot—is this a garb for flight?
" Or is that instrument more fit for fight?"

" Misdoubting Corsair! I have gain'd the guard,
" Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward.
" A single word of mine removes that chain:
" Without some aid how here could I remain?
" Well, since we met, hath sped my busy time,
" If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime:
" The crime—'tis none to punish those of Seyd.
" That hated tyrant, Conrad—he must bleed!
" I see thee shudder—but my soul is changed—
" Wrong'd, spurn'd, reviled—and it shall be avenged—
" Accused of what till now my heart disdain'd—
" Too faithful, though to bitter bondage chain'd.
" Yes, smile!—but he had little cause to sneer,
" I was not treacherous then—nor thou too dear:
" But he has said it—and the jealous well,
" Those tyrants, teasing, tempting to rebel,
" Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.
" I never loved—he bought me—somewhat high—
" Since with me came a heart he could not buy.
" I was a slave unmurmuring; he hath said,
" But for his rescue I with thee had fled.
" 'Twas false thou know'st—but let such augurs rue,
" Their words are omens Insult renders true.

" Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer;
" This fleeting grace was only to prepare
" New torments for thy life, and my despair.
" Mine too he threatens; but his dotage still
" Would fain reserve me for his lordly will:
" When wearier of these fleeting charms and me,
" There yawns the sack—and yonder rolls the sea!
" What, am I then a toy for dotard's play,
" To wear but till the gilding frets away?
" I saw thee—loved thee—owe thee all—would save,
" If but to show how grateful is a slave.
" But had he not thus menaced fame and life,
" (And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in strife)
" I still had saved thee—but the Pacha spared.
" Now I am all thine own—for all prepared:
" Thou lov'st me not—nor know'st—or but the worst.
" Alas! this love—that hatred are the first—
" Oh! could'st thou prove my truth, thou would'st not start,
" Nor fear the fire that lights an Eastern heart,
" 'Tis now the beacon of thy safety—now
" It points within the port a Mainote prow:
" But in one chamber, where our path must lead,
" There sleeps—he must not wake—the oppressor Seyd!"

" Gulnare—Gulnare—I never felt till now
" My abject fortune, wither'd fame so low:
" Seyd is mine enemy: had swept my band
" From earth with ruthless but with open hand,
" And therefore came I, in my bark of war,
" To smite the smiter with the scimitar;

" Such is my weapon—not the secret knife—
" Who spares a woman's seeks not slumber's life.
" Thine saved I gladly, Lady, not for this—
" Let me not deem that mercy shown amiss.
" Now fare thee well—more peace be with thy breast!
" Night wears apace—my last of earthly rest!"

" Rest! Rest! by sunrise must thy sinews shake,
" And thy limbs writhe around the ready stake.
" I heard the order—saw—I will not see—
" If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee.
" My life—my love—my hatred—all below
" Are on this cast—Corsair! 'tis but a blow!
" Without it flight were idle—how evade
" His sure pursuit? my wrongs too unrepaid,
" My youth disgraced—the long, long wasted years,
" One blow shall cancel with our future fears;
" But since the dagger suits thee less than brand,
" I 'll try the firmness of a female hand.
" The guards are gain'd—one moment all were o'er—
" Corsair! we meet in safety or no more;
" If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud
" Will hover o'er thy scaffold, and my shroud."

IX.

She turn'd, and vanish'd ere he could reply,
But his glance follow'd far with eager eye;
And gathering, as he could, the links that bound
His form, to curl their length, and curb their sound,
Since bar and bolt no more his steps preclude,
He, fast as fetter'd limbs allow, pursued.
'Twas dark and winding, and he knew not where
That passage led; nor lamp nor guard were there:

He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek
Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak?
Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems to bear
Full on his brow, as if from morning air—
He reach'd an open gallery—on his eye
Gleam'd the last star of night, the clearing sky:
Yet scarcely heeded these—another light
From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.
Towards it he moved; a scarcely closing door
Reveal'd the ray within, but nothing more.
With hasty step a figure outward past,
Then paused—and turn'd—and paused—'tis She at last!
No poniard in that hand—nor sign of ill—
"Thanks to that softening heart—she could not kill!"
Again he look'd, the wildness of her eye
Starts from the day abrupt and fearfully.
She stopp'd—threw back her dark far-floating hair,
That nearly veil'd her face and bosom fair:
As if she late had bent her leaning head
Above some object of her doubt or dread.
They meet—upon her brow—unknown—forgot—
Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a spot—
Its hue was all he saw, and scarce withstood—
Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime—'tis blood!

X.

He had seen battle—he had brooded lone
O'er promised pangs to sentenced guilt foreshown;
He had been tempted—chasten'd—and the chain
Yet on his arms might ever there remain:

But ne'er from strife—captivity—remorse—
From all his feelings in their inmost force—
So thrill'd—so shudder'd every creeping vein,
As now they froze before that purple stain.
That spot of blood, that light but guilty streak,
Had banish'd all the beauty from her cheek!
Blood he had view'd—could view unmoved—but then
It flow'd in combat, or was shed by men!

XI.

"'Tis done—he nearly waked—but it is done.
"Corsair! he perish'd—thou art dearly won.
"All words would now be vain—away—away!
"Our bark is tossing—'tis already day.
"The few gain'd over, now are wholly mine,
"And these thy yet surviving band shall join:
"Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,
"When once our sail forsakes this hated strand."

XII.

She clapp'd her hands—and through the gallery pour,
Equipp'd for flight, her vassals—Greek and Moor;
Silent but quick they stoop, his chains unbind;
Once more his limbs are free as mountain wind!
But on his heavy heart such sadness sate,
As if they there transferr'd that iron weight.
No words are utter'd—at her sign, a door
Reveals the secret passage to the shore;
The city lies behind—they speed, they reach
The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;
And Conrad following, at her beck, obey'd,
Nor cared he now if rescued or betray'd;

Resistance were as useless as if Seyd
Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

XIII.

Embark'd, the sail unfurl'd, the light breeze blew—
How much had Conrad's memory to review!
Sunk he in Contemplation, till the cape
Where last he anchor'd rear'd its giant shape.
Ah!—since that fatal night, though brief the time,
Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.
As its far shadow frown'd above the mast,
He veil'd his face, and sorrow'd as he past;
He thought of all—Gonsalvo and his band,
His fleeting triumph and his failing hand;
He thought on her afar, his lonely bride:
He turn'd and saw—Gulnare, the homicide!

XIV.

She watch'd his features till she could not bear
Their freezing aspect and averted air,
And that strange fierceness foreign to her eye,
Fell quench'd in tears, too late to shed or dry.
She knelt beside him and his hand she prest,
" Thou may'st forgive though Alla's self detest;
" But for that deed of darkness what wert thou?
" Reproach me—but not yet—Oh! spare me *now!*
" I am not what I seem—this fearful night
" My brain bewilder'd—do not madden quite!
" If I had never loved—though less my guilt,
" Thou hadst not lived to—hate me—if thou wilt."

XV.

She wrongs his thoughts, they more himself upbraid
Than her, though undesign'd, the wretch he made;

But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexprest,
They bleed within that silent cell—his breast.
Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the surge,
The blue waves sport around the stern they urge;
Far on the horizon's verge appears a speck,
A spot—a mast—a sail—an armed deck!
Their little bark her men of watch descry,
And ampler canvas woos the wind from high;
She bears her down majestically near,
Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier;
A flash is seen—the ball beyond their bow
Booms harmless, hissing to the deep below.
Up rose keen Conrad from his silent trance,
A long, long absent gladness in his glance;
"'Tis mine—my blood-red flag! again—again—
"I am not all deserted on the main!"
They own the signal, answer to the hail,
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken sail.
"'Tis Conrad! Conrad!" shouting from the deck,
Command nor duty could their transport check!
With light alacrity and gaze of pride,
They view him mount once more his vessel's side;
A smile relaxing in each rugged face,
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough embrace.
He, half-forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may greet,
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,
And feels he yet can conquer and command!

XVI.

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'erflow,
Yet grieve to win him back without a blow;

They sail'd prepared for vengeance—had they known
A woman's hand secured that deed her own,
She were their queen—less scrupulous are they
Than haughty Conrad how they win their way.
With many an asking smile, and wondering stare,
They whisper round, and gaze upon Gulnare;
And her, at once above—beneath her sex,
Whom blood appall'd not, their regards perplex.
To Conrad turns her faint imploring eye,
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by;
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,
Which—Conrad safe—to fate resign'd the rest.
Though worse than phrensy could that bosom fill,
Extreme in love or hate, in good or ill,
The worst of crimes had left her woman still!

XVII.

This Conrad mark'd, and felt—ah! could he less?—
Hate of that deed—but grief for her distress;
What she has done no tears can wash away,
And Heaven must punish on its angry day:
But—it was done: he knew, whate'er her guilt,
For him that poniard smote, that blood was spilt;
And he was free!—and she for him had given
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven!
And now he turn'd him to that dark-eyed slave
Whose brow was bow'd beneath the glance he gave,
Who now seem'd changed and humbled:—faint and meek,
But varying oft the colour of her cheek
To deeper shades of paleness—all its red
That fearful spot which stain'd it from the dead!

He took that hand—it trembled—now too late—
So soft in love—so wildly nerved in hate;
He clasp'd that hand—it trembled—and his own
Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.
"Gulnare!"—but she replied not—"dear Gulnare!"
She raised her eye—her only answer there—
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace:
If he had driven her from that resting-place,
His had been more or less than mortal heart,
But—good or ill—it bade her not depart.
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,
His latest virtue then had join'd the rest.
Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss
That ask'd from form so fair no more than this,
The first, the last that Frailty stole from Faith—
To lips where Love had lavish'd all his breath,
To lips—whose broken sighs such fragrance fling,
As he had fann'd them freshly with his wing!

XVIII.

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely isle.
To them the very rocks appear to smile;
The haven hums with many a cheering sound,
The beacons blaze their wonted stations round,
The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,
And sportive dolphins bend them through the spray;
Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill, discordant shriek,
Greets like the welcome of his tuneless beak!
Beneath each lamp that through its lattice gleams,
Their fancy paints the friends that trim the beams.
Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
Like Hope's gay glance from Ocean's troubled foam?

XIX.

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,
And midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower:
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,
Amid so many, hers alone is dark.
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never fail'd,
Nor now, perchance, extinguish'd, only veil'd.
With the first boat descends he for the shore,
And looks impatient on the lingering oar.
Oh! for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
To bear him like an arrow to that height!
With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,
Strives through the surge, bestrides the beach, and high
Ascends the path familiar to his eye.

He reach'd his turret door—he paused—no sound
Broke from within; and all was night around.
He knock'd, and loudly—footstep nor reply
Announced that any heard or deem'd him nigh;
He knock'd—but faintly—for his trembling hand
Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.
The portal opens—'tis a well known face—
But not the form he panted to embrace.
Its lips are silent—twice his own essay'd,
And fail'd to frame the question they delay'd;
He snatch'd the lamp—its light will answer all—
It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall.
He would not wait for that reviving ray—
As soon could he have linger'd there for day;
But, glimmering through the dusky corridore,
Another chequers o'er the shadow'd floor;

His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
All that his heart believed not—yet foretold!

XX.

He turn'd not—spoke not—sunk not—fix'd his look,
And set the anxious frame that lately shook:
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain!
In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death with gentler aspect wither'd there;
And the cold flowers [16] her colder hand contain'd,
In that last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep:
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,
And veil'd—thought shrinks from all that lurk'd below—
Oh! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light!
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—
Yet, yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wish'd repose—but only for a while;
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long—fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which, late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;
These—and the pale pure cheek, became the bier—
But she is nothing—wherefore is he here?

XXI.

He ask'd no question—all were answer'd now
By the first glance on that still—marble brow.
It was enough—she died—what reck'd it how?

The love of youth, the hope of better years,
The source of softest wishes, tenderest fears,
The only living thing he could not hate,
Was reft at once—and he deserved his fate,
But did not feel it less;—the good explore,
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar:
The proud—the wayward—who have fix'd below
Their joy—and find this earth enough for woe,
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—
But who in patience parts with all delight?
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
Mask hearts where grief hath little left to learn;
And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost,
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

XXII.

By those, that deepest feel, is ill exprest
The indistinctness of the suffering breast;
Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.
On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion prest,
And stupor almost lull'd it into rest;
So feeble now—his mother's softness crept
To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept:
It was the very weakness of his brain,
Which thus confess'd without relieving pain.
None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if seen,
That useless flood of grief had never been:
Nor long they flow'd—he dried them to depart,
In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart:

The sun goes forth—but Conrad's day is dim;
And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him.
There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,
On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind!
Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide!

XXIII.

His heart was form'd for softness—warp'd to wrong;
Betray'd too early, and beguiled too long;
Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew
Within the grot; like that had harden'd too;
Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials pass'd,
But sunk, and chill'd, and petrified at last.
Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the rock;
If such his heart, so shatter'd it the shock.
There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,
Though dark the shade—it shelter'd—saved till now.
The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted both,
The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth:
The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell
Its tale, but shrunk and wither'd where it fell,
And of its cold protector, blacken round
But shiver'd fragments on the barren ground!

XXIV.

'Tis morn—to venture on his lonely hour
Few dare; though now Anselmo sought his tower.
He was not there—nor seen along the shore;
Ere night, alarm'd, their isle is traversed o'er:
Another morn—another bids them seek,
And shout his name till echo waxeth weak;

‡

Mount—grotto—cavern—valley search'd in vain,
They find on shore a sea-boat's broken chain:
Their hope revives—they follow o'er the main.
'Tis idle all—moons roll on moons away,
And Conrad comes not—came not since that day:
Nor trace, nor tidings of his doom declare
Where lives his grief, or perish'd his despair!
Long mourn'd his band whom none could mourn beside;
And fair the monument they gave his bride:
For him they raise not the recording stone—
His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known;
He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue, and a thousand crimes. (17)

NOTES.

The time in this poem may seem too short for the occurrences, but the whole of the Ægean isles are within a few hours' sail of the continent, and the reader must be kind enough to take the *wind* as I have often found it.

Note 1, page 238, line 21.

Of fair Olympia loved and left of old.

Orlando, Canto 10.

Note 2, page 243, line 10.

Around the waves' phosphoric brightness broke.

By night, particularly in a warm latitude, every stroke of the oar, every motion of the boat or ship, is followed by a slight flash like sheet lightning from the water.

Note 3, page 246, line 18.

Though to the rest the sober berry's juice.

Coffee.

Note 4, page 246, line 20.

The long Chibouque's dissolving cloud supply.

Pipe.

Note 5, page 246, line 21.

While dance the Almas to wild minstrelsy.

Dancing girls.

Note to Canto II. page 247, line 5.

It has been objected that Conrad's entering disguised as a spy is out of nature.—Perhaps so. I find something not unlike it in history.

" Anxious to explore with his own eyes the state of the Vandals, Majorian ventured, after disguising the colour of his hair, to visit Carthage in the character of his own ambassador; and Genseric was afterwards mortified by the discovery, that he had entertained and dismissed the Emperor of the Romans. Such an anecdote may be rejected as an improbable fiction; but it is a fiction which would not have been imagined unless in the life of a hero." *Gibbon, D. and F. Vol.* VI. *p.* 180.

That Conrad is a character not altogether out of nature I shall attempt to prove by some historical coincidences which I have met with since writing " The Corsair."

" Eccelin prisonnier," dit Rolandini, " s'enfermoit dans un silence menaçant, il fixoit sur la terre son visage feroce, et ne donnoit point d'essor à sa profonde indignation.—De toutes parts cependant les soldats et les peuples accouroient; ils vouloient voir cet homme, jadis si puissant, et la joie universelle eclatoit de toutes parts.

* * * * *

" Eccelin étoit d'une petite taille; mais tout l'aspect de sa personne, tous ses mouvemens, indiquoient un soldat.—Son langage étoit amer, son deportement superbe—et par son seul egard, il faisoit trembler les plus hardis." *Sismondi, tome* III. *page* 219, 220.

" Gizericus (Genseric, king of the Vandals, the conqueror of both Carthage and Rome), statura mediocris, et equi casu claudicans, animo profundus, sermone rarus, luxuriæ contemptor, irâ turbidus, habendi cupidus, ad solicitandas gentes providentissimus," &c. &c. *Jornandes de Rebus Geticis, c.* 33.

I beg leave to quote these gloomy realities to keep in countenance my Giaour and Corsair.

Note 6, page 249, line 27.

And my stern vow and order's laws oppose.

The Dervises are in colleges, and of different orders, as the monks.

Note 7, page 251, line 2.

They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai!

Satan.

Note 8, page 251, line 23.

He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight.

A common and not very novel effect of Mussulman anger. See Prince Eugene's Memoirs, page 24. "The Seraskier received a wound in the thigh; he plucked up his beard by the roots, because he was obliged to quit the field."

Note 9, page 253, line 7.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare.

Gulnare, a female name; it means, literally, the flower of the pomegranate.

Note 10, page 261, line 2.

Till even the scaffold echoes with their jest!

In Sir Thomas More, for instance, on the scaffold, and Anne Boleyn in the Tower, when grasping her neck, she remarked that it "was too slender to trouble the headsman much." During one part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some "mot" as a legacy; and the quantity of facetious last words spoken during that period would form a melancholy jest-book of a considerable size.

Note 11, page 266, line 4.

That closed their murder'd sage's latest day!

Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset (the hour of execution), notwithstanding the entreaties of his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

Note 12, page 266, line 16.

The queen of night asserts her silent reign.

The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of shorter duration.

Note 13, page 266, line 26.

The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk.

The Kiosk is a Turkish summer-house: the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes.—Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

Note 14, page 267, line 6.

That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.

The opening lines as far as section II. have, perhaps, little business here, and were annexed to an unpublished (though printed) poem; but they were written on the spot in the Spring of 1811, and—I scarce know why—the reader must excuse their appearance here if he can.

Note 15, page 270, line 9.

His only bends in seeming o'er his beads.

The Comboloio, or Mahometan rosary; the beads are in number ninety-nine.

Note 16, page 286, line 9.

And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd.

In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.

Note 17, page 289, last line.

Link'd with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.

That the point of honour which is represented in one instance of Conrad's character has not been carried beyond the bounds of probability may perhaps be in some degree confirmed by the following anecdote of a brother buccaneer in the year 1814.

Our readers have all seen the account of the enterprise against the pirates of Barrataria; but few, we believe, were informed of the situation, history, or nature of that establishment. For the information of such as were unacquainted with it, we have procured from a friend the following interesting narrative of the main facts, of which he has personal knowledge, and which cannot fail to interest some of our readers.

Barrataria is a bay, or a narrow arm of the gulf of Mexico: it runs through a rich but very flat country, until it reaches within a mile of the Mississipi river, fifteen miles below the city of New Orleans. The bay has branches almost innumerable, in which persons can lie concealed from the severest scrutiny. It communicates with three lakes which lie on the southwest side, and these, with the lake of the same name,

and which lies contiguous to the sea, where there is an island formed by the two arms of this lake and the sea. The east and west points of this island were fortified in the year 1811, by a band of pirates, under the command of one Monsieur La Fitte. A large majority of these outlaws are of that class of the population of the state of Louisiana who fled from the island of St. Domingo during the troubles there, and took refuge in the island of Cuba; and when the last war between France and Spain commenced, they were compelled to leave that island with the short notice of a few days. Without ceremony, they entered the United States, the most of them the state of Louisiana, with all the negroes they had possessed in Cuba. They were notified by the Governor of that State of the clause in the constitution which forbad the importation of slaves; but, at the same time, received the assurance of the Governor that he would obtain, if possible, the approbation of the general Government for their retaining this property.

The Island of Barrataria is situated about lat. 29 deg. 15 min. lon. 92. 30. and is as remarkable for its health as for the superior scale and shell fish with which its waters abound. The chief of this horde, like Charles de Moor, had mixed with his many vices some virtues. In the year 1813, this party had, from its turpitude and boldness, claimed the attention of the Governor of Louisiana; and to break up the establishment, he thought proper to strike at the head. He therefore offered a reward of 500 dollars for the head of Monsieur La Fitte, who was well known to the inhabitants of the city of New Orleans, from his immediate connexion, and his once having been a fencing-master in that city of great reputation, which art he learnt in Buonaparte's army, where he was a captain. The reward which was offered by the Governor for the head of La Fitte was answered by the offer of a reward from the latter of 15,000 for the head of the Governor. The Governor ordered out a company to march from the city to La Fitte's island, and to burn and destroy all the property, and to bring to the city of New Orleans all his banditti. This company, under the command of a man who had been the intimate associate of this bold Captain, approached very near to the fortified island, be-

fore he saw a man, or heard a sound, until he heard a whistle, not unlike a boatswain's call. Then it was he found himself surrounded by armed men who had emerged from the secret avenues which led into Bayou. Here it was that the modern Charles de Moor developed his few noble traits; for to this man who had come to destroy his life and all that was dear to him, he not only spared his life, but offered him that which would have made the honest soldier easy for the remainder of his days, which was indignantly refused. He then, with the approbation of his captor, returned to the city. This circumstance, and some concomitant events, proved that this band of pirates was not to be taken by land. Our naval force having always been small in that quarter, exertions for the destruction of this illicit establishment could not be expected from them until augmented; for an officer of the navy, with most of the gun-boats on that station, had to retreat from an overwhelming force of La Fitte's. So soon as the augmentation of the navy authorised an attack, one was made; the overthrow of this banditti has been the result; and now this almost invulnerable point and key to New Orleans is clear of an enemy, it is to be hoped the government will hold it by a strong military force. —*From an American Newspaper.*

In Noble's continuation of Granger's Biographical History, there is a singular passage in his account of archbishop Blackbourne, and as in some measure connected with the profession of the hero of the foregoing poem, I cannot resist the temptation of extracting it.

" There is something mysterious in the history and character
" of Dr. Blackbourne. The former is but imperfectly known;
" and report has even asserted he was a buccaneer; and that
" one of his brethren in that profession having asked, on his
" arrival in England, what had become of his old chum,
" Blackbourne, was answered, he is archbishop of York. We
" are informed, that Blackbourne was installed sub-dean of
" Exeter, in 1694, which office he resigned in 1702; but after
" his successor Lewis Barnet's death, in 1704, he regained it.

" In the following year he became dean; and, in 1714, held with " it the archdeanery of Cornwall. He was consecrated bishop " of Exeter, February 24, 1716; and translated to York, No- " vember 28, 1724, as a reward, according to court scandal, for " uniting George I. to the Duchess of Munster. This, how- " ever, appears to have been an unfounded calumny. As arch- " bishop he behaved with great prudence, and was equally re- " spectable as the guardian of the revenues of the see. Rumour " whispered he retained the vices of his youth, and that a passion " for the fair sex formed an item in the list of his weaknesses; " but so far from being convicted by seventy witnesses, he does " not appear to have been directly criminated by one. In short, " I look upon these aspersions as the effects of mere malice. " How is it possible a buccaneer should have been so good a " scholar as Blackbourne certainly was? he who had so per- " fect a knowledge of the classics (particularly of the Greek " tragedians), as to be able to read them with the same ease as " he could Shakspeare, must have taken great pains to acquire " the learned languages; and have had both leisure and good " masters. But he was undoubtedly educated at Christ-church " College, Oxford. He is allowed to have been a pleasant man: " this, however, was turned against him, by its being said, 'he " gained more hearts than souls.'"

" The only voice that could soothe the passions of the savage " (Alphonso 3d) was that of an amiable and virtuous wife, the " sole object of his love; the voice of Donna Isabella, the " daughter of the Duke of Savoy, and the grand-daughter of " Philip 2d, King of Spain.—Her dying words sunk deep into " his memory; his fierce spirit melted into tears; and after the " last embrace, Alphonso retired into his chamber to bewail his " irreparable loss, and to meditate on the vanity of human life." —*Miscellaneous Works of Gibbon, New Edition*, 8vo. vol. 3, page 473.

END OF VOL. II.

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